

the principles of civil liberty, such as Algernon Sidney, II. Nevill, Marten, Wildman and Harrington <sup>1</sup>

Richard Baxter was also aware of it, and wrote in reply to of Harrington's references to Machiavelli

I know Mr Harrington is here involved (as he speaks) by *Machiavell* Nowonder But if *Machiavell* be become a Puritan to him, what is Harrington to us?<sup>2</sup>

Baxter elaborated the theme of Harrington's godlessness some length <sup>3</sup> The fifth monarchist John Rogers, as well, took Harrington to task for his secular approach to politics, commented particularly on 'the Heathens whom Mr Harrington most follows, for they admit not the Holy Scriptures, or (heavenly) Politicks' <sup>4</sup> More generally

requisite is it for the Body Politick, that we disquiet it not with perplexable *Platonian* speculations, or the rolling Political Idea every ones private reason, or with Reason of State, like to *Machiavell's Prince*, whose principles of Policy and knavery I have answered and encountred with principles of piety and honesty, in a Treatise long ago, (\*) so shall say the less here <sup>5</sup>

But Mathew Wren (by far the most able of Harrington's anti-republican critics) had no such reservations and accepted without demur Harrington's secular, untheological context of political discussion Wren,<sup>6</sup> in fact, appears to have been alarmed

<sup>1</sup> *History of My Own Time* (ed. Ayr) 2 vols. Oxford, 1897-1900, vol. I, p. 120

<sup>2</sup> *A Holy Commonwealth or Political Aphorisms etc*, Written by Richard Baxter at the invitation of James Harrington Esquire, London, 1659 p. 235

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 225-37

<sup>4</sup> *A Christian Conceration with Mr Prin, Mr Baxter, Mr Harrington, For the True Cause of the Commonwealth*, London, 1659 p. 73

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105, and see pp. 70-84 (particularly pp. 82-4) Harrington replied to this taunting Rogers for not daring directly to call him an atheist (*A Parallel of the Spirit of the People with The Spirit of Mr Rogers*, p. 615) Rogers answered by reproaching him for his company (*Mr Harrington's Politics Unparallel'd* in p., n.d., p. 8) The asterisk is to a marginal reference 'See or Doomsday drawing nigh' for which, see above, p. 158, n. 2 See John Gauden, M.D., *Kakodopyon, seu Medicatrix, Slight Healings of I Hurts*, London, 1660, *passim* (particularly pp. 90 ff., and 112)

<sup>6</sup> *Considerations on Mr Harrington's Commonwealth of Oceana*, L.

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BOOK 4 of THOUGHT and EXPRESSION in the SIXTEENTH CENTURY

# the english mind

HENRY OSBORN TAYLOR

Nowhere does the impact of changing social and political conditions upon the literature of a people express itself so explicitly as in the literature of Tudor England. It is one of the many virtues of *The English Mind* that it conveys so distinctly the dynamic relationship between the intellectual products of an age and the society itself.

Henry Osborn Taylor, who was born in New York City on December 5, 1856, and died there on April 13, 1941, belongs to the generation of outstanding American historians that include Lynn Thorndike, James Harvey Robinson, and Preserved Smith. Taylor was graduated from Harvard in 1878 and received a degree in law from Columbia University in 1881. Law, however, offered little satisfaction to him as a profession, so he turned instead to the study of Western culture and lectured at various universities. He was president of the American Historical Association in 1927.

In addition to *Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century*, of which *The English Mind* is Book 4, Taylor's works include *Ancient Ideals, A Study of the Intellectual and Spiritual Growth from Early Times to the Establishment of Christianity* (2 vols., 2nd ed. 1913), *Freedom of the Mind in History* (2nd ed. 1924), and *A Historian's Creed* (1939). His most important work is *The Medieval Mind* (2 vols., 5th ed. 1938).

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# THE ENGLISH MIND

Book 4 of *Thought and Expression in the  
Sixteenth Century*



COLLIER BOOKS  
NEW YORK, N. Y.

HARRINGTON, HOBBS, GOD AND MACHIAVELLI

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## About the Author

HENRY OSBORN TAYLOR belongs to the outstanding generation of American historians that includes Lynn Thorndike, James Harvey Robinson, and Preserved Smith. He was born December 5, 1856, in New York City, and died there on April 13, 1941. Taylor was graduated from Harvard in 1878 and received a degree in law from Columbia University in 1881. Law was not his calling, however, and he soon began to devote himself to the study of Western culture.

*Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century* (2 vols., 1920) and *The Medieval Mind* (2 vols., 5th ed. 1938) are classics in the historiography of ideas in America. Other books by Taylor include his first work, *Ancient Ideals: a Study of the Intellectual and Spiritual Growth from Early Times to the Establishment of Christianity* (2 vols., 2nd ed. 1913), *Freedom of the Mind in History* (2nd ed. 1924), and *A Historian's Creed* (1939).

*Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century* is now published by Collier Books in five volumes, each of which may be read independently: *The Humanism of Italy*, *Erasmus and Luther*, *The French Mind*, *The English Mind*, and *Philosophy and Science in the Renaissance* are the titles of the separate volumes in this new edition.

## Foreword

The Renaissance has long been understood to be an adaptation of classical models and medieval precedents as well as the making of a new form in response to changed social and political conditions. Nowhere is this dual process of Renaissance literature more clearly and greatly achieved as in the England of the Tudors. In Spenser, Sidney, and Jonson the great classical canon of the poet—love lyric, eclogue, pastoral, and epic—is once again fulfilled, and the great subjects of eros, arms, and letters, with the social correspondences they imply, are made possible by their fitting relation to English life under Elizabeth. And still English life was a more fluid and complex reality than these forms could encompass, and Elizabethan drama becomes a new form, unique and hardly preceded, by which new order is found for so large a world of new experience. No doubt Shakespeare's poems and plays are the creation of a single, remarkable genius, but they are also the supreme fruition of a remarkable age in literature and learning.

There is no comparable body of literature to which the English-speaking reader returns with more frequency or greater intimacy. Elizabethan literature is the subject of *The English Mind*, the fourth part of Henry Osborn Taylor's *Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century*. But it is only a part of his subject, for the literature of the period is not properly understood without the social context out of which it grows. Taylor's subject naturally leads him to an account of the Reformation of Henry VIII, to Elizabeth's success in making the Church of England a

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national, Protestant, institution, and the crown and royal household the chief organs of government. It leads him also to Wycliffe, Puritan doctrine, and Hooker. Not one of these events and intellectual developments, as Taylor shows, amounted to a radical break within the past, but combined they were bound to alter the traditional balance of religious and political life in England, and consequently the balance of literature and thought. It is this organic sense of literature and history that gives a reading of *The English Mind* a well-directed enthusiasm for the study of necessary relations between literature and society.



## Note

ELIZABETHAN LITERATURE is the chief subject of *The English Mind*, the fourth part of Henry Osborn Taylor's *Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century*. But it is only a part of his subject, for Taylor insists that the literature of the period cannot properly be understood without knowing the social context out of which it grows. Taylor's subject leads him naturally to an account of the Reformation of Henry VIII and to Elizabeth's success in making the Church of England a national institution. Under Elizabeth, the crown emerged as the focus of a highly centralized government, England became the very model of the Renaissance nation-state. These events, as Taylor shows, did not amount to a radical break with the past, but in altering the religion and politics of England, they were bound to alter literature and thought as well. It is this organic sense of literature and history that makes *The English Mind* a well-directed study of the necessary relations between literature and society.

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## Preface

My purpose is to give an intellectual survey of the sixteenth century. I would set forth the human susceptibilities and faculties of this alluring time, its tastes, opinions and appreciations, as they expressed themselves in scholarship and literature, in philosophy and science, and in religious reform. Italian painting is presented briefly as the supreme self-expression of the Italians.

The more typical intellectual interests of the fifteenth century also are discussed for their own sake, while those of the previous time are treated as introductory. I have tried to show the vital continuity between the prior mediæval development and the period before us.

The mind must fetch a far compass if it would see the sixteenth century truly. Every stage in the life and thought of Europe represents a passing phase, which is endowed with faculties not begotten of itself, and brings forth much that is not exclusively its own. For good or ill, for patent progress, or apparent retrogression, its capacities, idiosyncrasies and productions belong in large measure, to the whole, which is made up of past as well as present, the latter pregnant with the future. Yet, though fed upon the elements (sometimes the refuse) of the past, each time seems to develop according to its own nature. Waywardly, foolishly, or with wholesome originality, it evolves a novel temperament and novel thoughts.

We shall treat the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a final and objective present, and all that went before will be regarded as a past which entered into them. It included

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pagin Antiquity, Judaism and the Gospel the influence of the second East, the contribution of the Christian Fathers, —this whole store of knowledge and emotion, not merely as it came into being but in its changing progress through the Middle Ages, until it entered the thought of our period and became the stimulus or suggestion of its feeling. Distinctive mediaeval creations likewise must be included, seeing that they also entered formatively into the constitutions of later men. The Middle Ages helped antiquity to shape the faculties and furnish the tastes of the sixteenth century. These faculties and tastes were then applied to what the past seemed also to offer as from a distinct and separate platform. Only by realizing the action of these formative and contributive agencies shall we perceive this period's true relationships, and appreciate its caused and causal being begotten of the past, yet vital (as each period is) with its own spirit, and big with a modernity which was not yet.

Two pasts may be distinguished, the one remote, the other proximate. The former may be taken as consisting of the antique world as it became its greater self, and then as it crumbled, while its thought and mood were assuming those forms in which they passed into the Middle Ages. The proximate or immediate past was the mediaeval time, itself progressing century after century under the influence of whatever had entered into it chiefly through those last solvent and transition centuries in which the remote past ended.

The Middle Ages and the fifteenth or sixteenth century bore the same fundamental relationship to this remote past. Each succeeding mediaeval century, besides inheriting what had become known in the time directly preceding it, endeavored to reach back to the remote past for further treasure. Thus the twelfth century sought to reach behind the eleventh, in order to learn more of the greater past, and the thirteenth reached behind the twelfth. So Petrarch, in the fourteenth, would reach behind the vociferously damned thirteenth century to antiquity itself, and the

fifteenth century humanists endeavored to do likewise. That century, like Petrarch's time, drew from its immediate mediaeval past as copiously as each mediaeval century drew from its predecessor, and *willy nilly* resembled the mediaeval centuries in striving to reach back of them for treasures previously undisclosed.

One thinks of the transmitted influence of the past, whether remote or proximate, as knowledge and suggestion, as intellectual or emotional or social material to be appropriated and made further use of. It is well to think of it also as flowing on in modes of expression, which constitute the finished form of the matter, whether the form be in language or in the figures of plastic art. Thoughts and emotions cannot pass from one time to another save in modes of their expression. And the more finished and perfect, the more taking, the more beautiful, the form of expression, the more enduring will be its influence and effect. The seemingly formless material which is transmitted orally or in manuscripts or printed books from age to age, had necessarily reached some mode of expression, however vile. And although much wretched matter has come down through time, we may not ascribe its survival to the shortcomings of its form, but rather to the fact that somehow in its wretchedness and intellectual squalor it suited the squalid ignorance of men.

So it is fruitful to think, for instance, of each mediaeval century, as well as of the great sixteenth, as drawing the language of its thinking from the past, and then building up its own forms of thinking and expression. Each province of discipline furnishes concepts and a vocabulary. As each century appropriates them and makes them its own they become its modes of thought, and the forms of its self-expression. Thus not only thought, but the language of expression, is handed on with enhancements from generation to generation. Each generation uses the thought, and expresses itself in the forms and concepts, which it has made its own—has made into its self-expression. Yet there is some change, some increase, some advance. To the trans-

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formation of inherited thought and phrase into modes of self-expression, each century or generation brings a tone and temper of its own, perhaps some change of attitude toward life, and at all events the increment and teaching of the experience which has come to it through living

Difficulties of arrangement confront a work like the present. Shall it cleave to racehood and nationality or follow topics? Topics ignore racial lines and geographical boundaries.

The plan must bend to the demands on it. Sometimes racial traits dominate an individual, and the conditions of his life and land shape his career, even a great career like Luther's. A national situation may point the substance of an issue, as, in England, in Wyclif's controversy with the papacy. For quite another illustration, one may observe how a diversity of interest and taste between Italians and Frenchmen impressed a different purpose and manner upon classical studies in Italy and France.

On the other hand such a story as that of the advance of the physical sciences in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries has little to do with land or race, the votaries belong to every people, and pursue their investigations indifferently in their own countries or where foreign localities offer greater advantages. So a general survey should follow the course of the most dominant and vital elements.

A kindred question goes to the roots of the truth of phenomena: should one adhere to a temporal arrangement, century by century, or follow sequence of influence and effect across the imaginary boundaries of these arbitrary time divisions? While it is convenient to speak of "centuries," one is always pursuing the vital continuity of effect. The virtue of fruitful effort passes into future achievement. One seeks to follow facts in their progeny. Yet this is difficult, since the genealogical tree is infinitely ramified, and every event, every achievement, has as many forbears as a human being! The truthfulness of events lies in the process of *becoming*, rather than in the *concrete*

phenomenon which catches our attention. It would be as foolish to end the consideration of Petrarch with his death as it would be to treat him as if he and his work and influence really began the day when he was born, or first read Cicero. *Nothing begins or ends.* We may even think of all that is, or ever was or will be, as one mighty self-evolving present, which holds the effective being, the becoming of the past, and contains the future, of which this present is in turn the becoming.

HENRY OSBORN TAYLOR

New York, May, 1920.

## Chapter 1

### English Education in Letters

THE ENGLISH were the progeny of Britons, Saxons, Danes, and Gallicised Normans. After the Conquest, newcomers from the Continent constantly freshened this racial mixture, uniting with those who by a few, or many, generations had preceded them. Social fashions and enlightenment from abroad also affected these islanders, and such elements of Latin education as the more favored ones received.

An English speech developed, as well as political institutions and a common law, also an insular point of view, an English patriotism, and in fine an English genius which should set its stamp upon the achievements of an English race and find expression in its intellectual creations. Yet the language betrayed its heterogeneous constituents, and foreign currents were to remain evident in English thought and literature. Continental conditions and intrigues constantly affected the English political situation and foreign elements will be seen to enter, and sometimes neutralize each other, in the insular religious revolutions of the sixteenth century.

Of all centuries the sixteenth most strikingly exhibits the plastic power of the English genius, which was then masterfully appropriating the foreign matter and compelling it to contribute to the expression of the mental and emotional experiences of the race. The products or expressions of this English genius will be seen in English legislation, in



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English conduct, in fortified modes of English thinking in Anglican forms of Christianity, and most gloriously in English songs and dramas.

With different emphasis or elusiveness these phenomena testify to the continuity of the English past and present, and evince the medial qualities of a people whose racehood was composite and whose language was not wholly Teutonic or Romance either in its genius or vocabulary. One will constantly encounter the effect of recent foreign fashions, or foreign thought, foreign learning including the invigorated humanism which entered from abroad and which Englishmen went abroad to seek, or, again, all foreign elements are sunk in the creative power, and lost in the magnificence, of the English imagination.

To trace the evolution of English political institutions out of an insular experience, instructed by foreign suggestions or impelled by external exigencies, to follow English education, note the use of antique or foreign material in *secular English thinking or philosophy*; observe the construction of an Anglican Christianity from the edicts of a King churning with popular approvals, which were affected by the ideas of Luther, Zwingli, or Calvin, and witness the *English literary genius leaping forth from conventions and conceits* insular or continental, and even from Latin and Greek translations—all this were to attempt the intellectual history of England. A few of the illustrative features of these vast *assimilative and creative processes* may be noted in this and the following chapters.

During no mediæval century did the influence of the antique civilization fail to act upon England nor did English students whether at home in Oxford or Cambridge, or at Paris Chartres or Orleans fail to prosecute some form of classical or antique study, impelled by love of letters or philosophy, or by a more conventionally pious motive. The English were not leaders here, yet John of Salisbury who passed much of his life in France and died as bishop of Chartres in the year 1180, was one of the best

scholars and most genial teachers of his time Robert Grosseteste, an emphatic English personality, earned learning from Paris to Oxford, and there did much to foster a closer knowledge of the tongues, a work which his great pupil Roger Bacon strove vigorously to further <sup>1</sup>

In the early fourteenth century, England sent forth revolutionary scholastics, like Duns Scotus and Occam, but she was scarcely conscious of the renewal of classic studies issuing from the personalities and writings of Petrarch and Boccaccio. Intellectually as well as geographically, England was one stage further than France from the rising Italian ardor for a classical humanism. The times were violent, and were to prove disastrous for her as well as for her chief continental neighbor, involved with her in an interminable war, which for France turned the first coming of letters from Italy into a false dawn, and for England issued finally in defeat upon the Continent and in dynastic war at home. Not even then were letters altogether quenched in Englishmen. Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, (b. 1391 d. 1447), brother of Henry V, tempered a rather malign career by an interest in books. He was a reader of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio as well as of the Latin classics. He collected books, which he gave or left to Oxford, he patronized Italian humanists, and, among his own countrymen, the poet Lydgate and the rather too clairvoyant ecclesiastic Pecock <sup>2</sup>. Lydgate knew no Greek, and his favorite ancient author was Seneca. He was still more occupied with Boccaccio and mediaeval Latin writers, from whom, rather than from the classic sources, he drew his knowledge of antiquity.

Some Englishmen of Duke Humphrey's generation or close to it, were drawn to Italy. There was the highborn and scholarly William Grey, who died as bishop of Ely, leaving to Balliol College his manuscripts of the writings of Poggio, Guarino and other Italians. His protégé was

<sup>1</sup>Cf. *The Mediaeval Mind* Vol II, p. 146 sqq.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. post, p. 59, sqq.

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John Free (d. 1465) or Phreas who lived in Italy, and translated a Greek work of Synesius. At the same time John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, travelled there, lived with humanists and bought their manuscripts. The shrewd reign of Henry VII (1485-1509) established commercial relations with Italian cities and drew Italian craftsmen, artists, and even diplomats to the service of a King who knew their worth. Intellectually Italian influence counts from the latter part of his reign, Dante and Petrarch became great names, while Boccaccio was translated and read and imitated. Other Italian poets and humanists also in their turn.<sup>3</sup>

Henry VIII was a highly educated youth, whose succession to the throne was hailed by Erasmus as ushering in a millennium of letters for England. In fact, it followed closely upon the coming of a better scholarship to Oxford. An early leader was Grocyn, apparently the first Englishman since Roger Bacon to teach Greek. Born about 1444, he taught Greek at Oxford before 1488, when he went to Italy, where he learned more Greek, to teach on his return. He was the eldest of the band of Scholars—Linacre, Colet, More—whom Erasmus met upon his first visit to England in 1499. Grocyn left an influence and a library, but apparently no writings of his own, when he died in 1519.

Thomas Linacre, a somewhat younger man of ampler genius, handed on the torch of classic study and of medicine. Elected fellow of All Souls in 1484, he spent the following years in Italy, where fortune proved kind. Lorenzo dei Medici permitted him to attend the lessons which Politian was giving Lorenzo's sons, he stayed in Rome and Venice under favorable auspices, and at Padua was made Doctor of Medicine. He became a good Latinist and Grecian, and was devoted to such medical study as the times afforded. Returning to England, he incidentally taught Greek to Thomas More, and was tutor to Prince Arthur, Henry VII's eldest son. Afterwards he became physician to

<sup>3</sup>See generally the valuable study of Mary A. Scott, *Elizabethan Translations from the Italian* (1916).

Henry VIII, and had Wolsey and other great ones for patients. Receiving, according to the custom, a number of ecclesiastical preferments, he devoted his income and his energies to founding the College of Physicians. This medical humanist translated works of Galen into Latin, and, dying in 1524, left his considerable property to support the College of Physicians and provide for medical studies in Oxford.

The coming of Erasmus to England in 1499, and his subsequent return and lengthy sojourns at London, Oxford and Cambridge were an inspiration and a financial burden to these English humanists, like More and Colet, whose friendship for this rising star of humanists lasted till death. Erasmus had scarcely entered on his career of Latin authorship when he first arrived, nor did he know much Greek. In fact he left England to study Greek in Paris. Some years later he lectured for a while at Cambridge. In England, as elsewhere, his works won vogue and influence, and were a power making for humane and religious enlightenment,—an enlightenment from a foreign source, which might be dimmed crossing the Channel.

No man in England worked more earnestly to spread learning and piety than John Colet, who was of the same age as Erasmus. Born in affluence, he was educated at Oxford, and then travelled and studied in France and Italy. Whether or not he ever listened to Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, he was influenced by their writings and by the *Hierarchies* of pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. He was a man of humane piety, and was strongly drawn to the Epistles of St. Paul, which he studied only in the Vulgate. Returning to his native land, he lectured at Oxford during portions of the years from 1497 to 1499, chiefly upon *Romans* and *Corinthians* and presented in these lectures a sound appreciation of the actual circumstances under which Paul wrote. He made an understanding of the historical situation a basis of his pious exposition of the text. This was indeed to introduce the new learning in biblical studies to his hearers.

In 1504 Henry VII made Colet Dean of St. Paul's Ca-

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thedral. He had always spoken out about church abuses, and as Dean found much that needed change. He began to preach in the Cathedral on Sundays and other festivals, in itself an innovation which was no more agreeable to his Chapter than his insistence upon temperance in food and drink. In fact, he did and said much to draw the dislike of his clerical brethren. His most memorable sermon was preached before a Convocation of the Church in 1511 to consider heresies and other matters. Colet showed them another kind of heresy, very unpleasant to their ears, the heresy of their own evil lives. His sermon, animated with instincts reappearing in the English Reformation, shows this English man utilizing whatever enlightenment he had obtained and remaking it into the expression of convictions of his own.

The text was from the twelfth chapter of Romans. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye reformed in the newness of your understanding, that ye may prove what is the good will of God, well pleasing and perfect." Unwillingly, yet in obedience to the Archbishop's command, he had come to preach before them, and to warn them to set their minds upon the reformation of the Church. The apostle forbids them to be conformed to the world, to wit, "in devilish pride, in carnal concupiscence, in worldly covetousness, in secular business." The preacher amplifies his theme from the worldly lives and customs of the clergy, through which the dignity of the priesthood is brought down to contempt, the order of the Church confused, and the laity given occasion to stumble by the example set them of the love of the world that casts men headlong into hell. "We are also nowadays grieved of heretics, men mad with marvellous foolishness. But the heresies of them are not so pestilent and pernicious unto us and the people, as the evil and wicked life of priests, the which, if we believe St. Bernard, is a certain kind of heresy, and the chief of all and most perilous."

The reform and restoration of the Church's estate, continues the preacher, must begin with 'you our fathers (the

bishops), and so follow in us your priests and in all the clergy" The Church needs no new laws, but the enforcement of what she has Let them be recalled and rehearsed those which warn you bishops to admit only worthy men to holy orders, and which command that benefices shall be given only to such, those which condemn simony and enjoin personal residence, those which forbid the clergy to be merchants, usurers, or to haunt taverns and carry arms, and consort with women, those which command them to walk the straight and narrow way, and not to concern themselves with secular business or sue in princes' courts for earthly things, those which govern the election of you bishops and enjoin your duties and "the good bestowing of the patrimony of Christ", and those which prevent the uncleanness of courts and provide for provincial and general councils Let it not be said of them that they lay grievous burdens on other men's backs, and will not so much as touch them with their little finger If ye keep the laws, ye will give us the light of your example, and we shall set an example to the larty and "you will be honored of the people" <sup>4</sup>

This sermon was a broad undoctinal program of the need for a practical self abnegating reformation No wonder that reputed "Lollards" liked to hear Colet preach, and that certain of the clergy whose withers were not unwrung made a futile attempt to have him tried for heresy Young King Henry said Colet was a good enough doctor for him He has another title to fame, as founder of St. Paul's School, which was to continue a beneficial factor in the education of English boys Although a Cathedral school existed, Colet founded his separately about the year 1510, "desiring nothing more than education and bringing up children in good manners and literature", and he set as "patrons and defenders governors and rulers of that same

<sup>4</sup>This sermon was preached in Latin The old English version is given in an appendix to J H Lupton's *Life of Dean Colet* (London 1887) who has also edited with an English translation, Colet's lectures on *Romans* and *Corinthians*

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school the most honest and faithful fellowship of the Mercers of London."<sup>6</sup>

The statutes of the founder prescribed the duties of master, undermaster, and chaplain, and rules for the pupils "Children of all nations and countries indifferently to the number of 153 according to the number of seats in the school" The school hours were set and rules of behavior As to what should be taught, says the founder "it passeth my wit to devise and determine in particular, but in general to speak and somewhat to say my mind I would they (the pupils) were taught always in good literature, both Latin and Greek, and good authors such as have the very Roman eloquence joined with wisdom, especially Christian authors that wrote their wisdom with clean and chaste Latin either in verse or prose, for my intent is by this school specially to increase knowledge and worshiping of God and our Lord Christ Jesu and good Christian life and manners in the children" So he wishes them first to learn the *Catechism* which he wrote in English, and sundry school books by Erasmus, then certain of the best among the early Christian authors who still used the speech of Tully, Salust and Virgil, before the coming of "that filthiness and all such abuse which the later blind world brought in, which more rather may be called *blotterature* than literature, [this] I utterly banish and exclude . . ." Forseeing the shifts of time, and considering the wisdom and goodness of the fellowship of Mercers, he leaves it to their discretion to alter and amend his statutes, thus further evincing the broad wisdom of the man who entrusted his school to a Merchants' Guild rather than to any ecclesiastical corporation.

Colet, dying in 1519, had the good fortune to pass away before Englishmen had to take sides between Henry and the pope His illustrious and somewhat younger friend, Sir Thomas More, suffered death for his conviction that the pope and not Henry VIII was the supreme head of the

<sup>6</sup>From the prologue to the Statutes, which are printed in an appendix to Lupton's *Life*.

Church in England And long before he died, the soul of More must have been riven by some sense of the inconsistency between the ideal radicalism of his *Utopia* with its suave tolerance in religion, and the violent language of the later controversial writings of its author and his stern suppression of heresy when Lord Chancellor To explain this problem of More's possible duality, there may be no need to assume changes in the man himself between early manhood and middle age The same nature may always have existed in this admirable person, but life's exigencies may have permitted some of his qualities to slumber while they enlisted others in active service, turning potency perhaps to strident fact.

Nature had endowed him with many talents and circumstance favored their development. Having passed a part of his boyhood in the household of Cardinal Morton one of Henry VII's ablest and best advisers, he went to Oxford. There he devoted himself to the humanities, and seems also to have felt the counter yearning for an ascetic religious life His father, a prominent lawyer, shortly took him from the university, and placed him in the Inns of Court Not long after, he is found lecturing upon Augustine's *City of God*, and then acting as a law reader The religious ascetic instinct still struggled with the duties and opportunities of a temporal career, and for several years he dwelt "religiously without vows" in the Carthusian house of London ('the Charterhouse of London') On the other hand, his desire to marry was strengthened by the advice of his "ghostly father" Dean Colet, and by pleasing intercourse with the marriageable daughters of an Essex gentleman The virtuous propriety of More's character was shown in his selection of the elder and less attractive daughter for his wife, fearing to put a slight upon her if he chose her preferable younger sister

Once married, he applied himself to the duties of his profession and budding public career, still appeasing his ascetic yearning by wearing a hair shirt, which he did not relinquish till he gave it to his daughter Margaret a few days before his death Elected a member of the Commons



at the age of twenty-six, he successfully opposed the King's demand for the ancient feudal aids to knight his eldest son and dower his eldest daughter. In this early action he evinced the moral and physical courage which never was to fail him. Clear minded, diligent and eloquent, More rapidly rose in his profession acting as counsel in the notable cases of the time. He was appointed to sundry public offices, attracted the notice of Wolsey and won the favor of the young King Henry VIII. Through him, he was made Privy Councillor, elected speaker of the House, made chancellor of the Duchy of Lancashire, and finally succeeded Wolsey as Lord Chancellor, in the first office of the realm. His administration of the Chancellorship was marked by an extraordinary efficiency and an exceptional probity. For his energy in the suppression of heresy, as well as for his defense of the Catholic Faith in these times which had become perilous, the bishops in Convocation raised a princely sum to reward him, which More refused. Having been Chancellor for three years, he returned the Great Seal to the King's hands in 1532 hoping thus to escape from embroilment against his conscience, in the royal supremacy and divorce, and devote the remainder of his life to piety and quiet work. It turned out otherwise. The King was set upon forcing this most admired of his subjects to take the oath supporting his headship of the Church of England. He no longer bore him any love—if indeed that King's love ever went beyond a quickened satisfaction at a subject's ministration to his will. When others were swearing to this oath, and men's eyes were naturally turned on More, how could that King tolerate such an example of recalcitrancy? The exigencies of Henry's policy impelled him to an execution which was not repugnant to his mood or nature. There is no need to re-tell that marvellous story of the imprisonment and execution of this noble and saintly man.\* We turn to earlier and lighter phases of his personality.

\*It is best told in the *Life of More* by his son-in-law Roper, (Margaret's husband) and in the letters of More written in his captivity.

More was a man of wit and imagination, with the tastes and aptitudes of a scholar. He learned his Greek from Grocyn and Linacre, and doubtless later through collaboration with Erasmus.<sup>7</sup> From the latter's first visit to England a strong friendship and mutual admiration arose between the two, which continued unshaken till the day when Erasmus with a good part of the learned world was horrified at the news of More's execution. More was always interested in theology, and liked to argue its points with this good friend. Together, they translated into Latin a number of the Dialogues of Lucian.<sup>8</sup> In selecting this brilliant and scandalous Ancient, More appears simply as a lover of the classics, with his Christian theology tucked well away. About the same period he translated into English an Italian Life, and letters, of Pico della Mirandola, in which congenial task the nobility of his nature and the beauty of his English were manifested at their brightest.

Erasmus wrote the *Praise of Folly* in More's house in 1509, and dedicated it to him. We may think of the *Utopia* as the answering note of More's Erasmian humanism, just as the ocean setting of the piece answered to the stir in men's minds made by the recent voyage and narrative of Americus Vesputius. Erasmus despised all vernaculars, and the *Utopia* was written in Latin, and not in that mother tongue of which More was a master. It was pacifist and socialistic, keenly denunciatory of the follies of avarice and the accumulation of wealth. It gently ridiculed the Friars and deprecated the needless number of priests. It argued against cruel and ineffective punishments, like hanging men for theft, and reflected upon the economic and social ills of England. There were no idlers in Utopia, all men and women labored. Hence six hours daily work sufficed to supply the common needs, and the remainder of the day was spent according to the tastes of a people who deemed human felicity to lie in the free cultivation and garnishing

<sup>7</sup>Seebohm's *Oxford Reformers* (Third ed., 1887) is the standard but not always accurate account of the relations between Colet, More, and Erasmus.

<sup>8</sup>First published in 1506.

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of the mind — "*animi libertatem cultumque*" None cared for gold, they used it for chamber pots, but drank from glass and earthen vessels. They preferred a dim light in their churches (here speaks the author's esthetic taste). They still obeyed the decree of their founder King that every man should be free to follow what religion he would, and to argue peaceably in its support.

The last principle, the much spoken of religious tolerance of the *Utopia*, was of a piece with the rest of this Platonic composition. It was a congruous part of its humanistic idealism, having no connection with actual life, enforcement of law, and maintenance of the Catholic faith, in sixteenth century England. There was no time in the life of this most reverent and legal minded Catholic when he would actually have tolerated any denial of the religion of the Roman Catholic Church. And as for innocent dallings with the idea of toleration in some unreal Atlantis, it must be remembered that the *Utopia* was published in 1516, a good year before Luther posted those fateful theses on the Wittenberg church door. The Lutheran revolt from the doctrine and authority of the Church awakened the self-consciousness of Catholics, and dispelled their tolerant security. No strict Catholic thereafter might indulge in wayward gambols. Had More foreseen the Lutheran revolt and the Anabaptist social upheavals apparently springing from it, he would not have written the *Utopia*. That indeed would have been playing with bell fire, quite consciously. His later anxious mind is shown by his words to his son-in-law: "Son Roper, I pray God that some of us, as high as we seem to sit upon the mountains treading heretics under our feet like ants, live not the day that we gladly would wish to be at a league and composition with them to let them have their churches quietly to themselves, so that they would be contented to let us have ours quietly to ourselves." So More spoke, before the King's divorce was broached, as Roper was congratulating him on "the happy state of the realm that had so Catholic a prince, that no heretic durst show his face." More already had forebodings

There is no need to give the details of More's polemic against Tyndale and other, mainly Lutheran, heretics. Earnestly, and perhaps eagerly, he used the powers of his Chancellorship to suppress heresy, persecute it, if one will use the term. It is superfluous to say that he thought himself fulfilling his highest duty. Likewise during his Chancellorship and the years following his retirement, he wrote indefatigably and voluminously, for there was then a huge crop of persons and books to write against. As he says in 1532: "Our Lord send us now some years as plenteous of good corn as we have had some years of late, plenteous of evil books. For they have grown so fast and sprongen up so thick, full of pestilent errors and pernicious heresies, that they have infected and killed, I fear me, more silly simple souls than the famine of the dear years destroyed bodies."

This passage which opens *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*, is followed by a descriptive list of these chief pestilent books. If Tyndale seemed his chief antagonist, there were many other heresy mongers. More took upon himself the defense of all the teachings of the Church. He supports purgatory, auricular confession, celibacy, image-worship, pilgrimages. He shows himself far more close-minded and conservative than Erasmus. But his was a hard position, writing controversial compositions in a crisis, when indeed men were suspecting that Henry secretly favored the heretics. Even a man as honest and sincere as More might find himself forced to support what it might have amused him to ridicule after the manner of Erasmus.

The circumstance that early in his life More lectured as well as studied in the Inns of Court, suggests the rôle of that veritable Law-school in enabling the Common Law of England to surmount the impact of the Civil Law in the sixteenth century, and in the end make most beneficial use of the principles of Roman jurisprudence. A vigorous and vital renewing of the study of Justinian's *Digest* was taking place in France and Italy, a renewal which, under such great leaders as Alciatus, Budé, and finally Cujas, was

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sloughing off the mummifying wrappings of the *Commentators*, and restoring to their virility the living and eternal texts

If the Roman law was then about to be "received" in a Teutonic Germany, why should it not subdue the Common Law of a less purely Teutonic England? Persuasion lay within its excellence everywhere, and in both England and Germany mighty influences were impelling its acceptance. But the Common Law of England proved tougher, and nothing had done more to toughen it than the yearly publication of law reports and the constant discussion and inculcation of its tenets in the Inns of Court. It was destined to triumph in the masterful career and influence of Sir Edward Coke, and thereafter still triumphantly intact, it proved capable of mollifying its harshness and amplifying its meagre experience from the equity and commercial law of Rome.<sup>9</sup>

From the law and from Sir Thomas More who suffered death in 1535, we turn to two younger men, scholars as well as educators, who will serve to illustrate the lack of epoch making qualities in English scholarship. One was Sir Thomas Elyot, an official in the time of Wolsey and Cromwell. He died in 1546. Various published works show him a well read Latinist not uninfluenced by Italian humanism. In 1531 he published his *Boke named the Gouuernour* which treated of the education proper to those who were likely to be called upon to exercise authority in the Commonwealth as prince or magistrate.<sup>10</sup> As he says in the Proheme addressed to the King, he would "describe in our vulgar tongue the form of a just public weal which matter I have gathered as well of the sayings of our most noble authors (Greek and Latin) as by my own experience." The book "treateth of the education of them that

<sup>9</sup>F. W. Maitland, *English Law and the Renaissance* (Cambridge 1901)

<sup>10</sup>The *Boke named the Gouuernour* devised by Sir Thomas Elyot, Knight, edited with a Life and full notes by H. H. S. Croft, 2 Vols. (London, 1880)

hereafter may be deemed worthy to be governors of the public weale under your highness" "A public weale" to Elyot's well read and experienced mind is a body living compact or made of sundry estates and degrees of men, which is disposed by the order of equity and governed by the rule and moderation of reason" He regarded the welfare of the whole Commonwealth as the right end to be held in view, yet inasmuch as "the base and vulgar inhabitants not advanced to any honor or dignity" are not likely to hold authority, his book has to do with the education of men of gentle birth. As was natural, and prudent in addressing Henry VIII, he says that "the best and most sure governance is that of one king or prince"

The book proceeds, with no tangibly original ideas, to set forth a suitable scheme of studies and education. It is filled with classic examples drawn from Plutarch and many other writers. The author evinces the broadening effect of the classics upon himself by the range of instructive incident and story, which he culls from them for the benefit of his readers. He inculcates the need of a good and beneficent character in rulers, and describes the moral education calculated to evoke it. In spite of the fact that the *Gouverneur* was so largely drawn from Plutarch, Plato and Aristotle, it has an English quality and vitality of its own, gained from the personal experience, and indeed springing from the personality, of its worthy author.

This practical and personal English element is less noticeable in the works of Roger Ascham, (1515-1568), a professional scholar, equipped with an ample store of Greek and Latin learning. His was largely an academic career passed as a fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and crowned by the attainment of the Public Oratorship of the University. But he hankered for the light of courts and their emoluments, and became to his delight, and moderate profit the tutor of the Princess Elizabeth. He has left famous descriptions of her early studies and proficiency,<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup>E.g. in Ep. XCIX, (Giles' ed., 1550)

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and has also told of that ill fated paragon of young womanhood, Lady Jane Grey, whom he found 'in her chamber, reading *Phaedo Platonis* in Greek, and that with as much delight as some gentlemen would read a merry tale of Boccace'<sup>12</sup> He was afterwards given the post of secretary to Edward VI, and discharged the duties of a like office under Mary and the young queen Elizabeth. A man of anti papal convictions and occasional bold expression, he could also realize the golden quality of silence.

Ascham was a diligent man with a retentive memory, and an excellent letter writer in both Latin and English. He associated with the scholarly and the great, and besides his interesting correspondence, and his enthusiastic, but pedantic, *Toxophilus*, on archery, he wrote his *Scholemaster*, towards the end of his life, and dedicated it to Elizabeth as he had dedicated the *Toxophilus* to her father. It betrays the thoroughly English satisfaction of its author at the privilege of associating with those of better birth than himself. It was "specially purposed for the private bringing up of youth in Gentlemen and noble mens houses, and commodious also for all such as had forgot the Latin tongue, and would, by themselves, without a Scholemaster, in short tyme, and with small paines, recover a sufficient habilitie, to understand, speake and write Latin." Just how the book would assist forgetful maturity to recover its youthful Latinity may not be clear. Yet it has an abundance of Latin Greek quotations, with some seasonable advice on the education of children and a considerable amount of formal pedantic definitions. It is not so strongly and personally put together as Elyot's *Gouverneur*.

These earlier examples of study and scholarship in England are suggestive of several points. First, that the progress of English scholarship in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries came through the studies of Englishmen upon the continent, or through the coming of learned foreigners to England. Secondly, profane studies with

<sup>12</sup>*Scholemaster*, Bk. I, cf. Ep. CXXIV, in Giles' edition.

Englishmen might quickly turn to serve the ends of a rational Christian piety, and proceed hand in hand with study of the Sacred Text and the Church Fathers,—as was indeed the case with Erasmus, who after all was England's chief enlightener. Thirdly, through the sixteenth century, Englishmen will contribute little to pure scholarship, profane or sacred, but in secular life and church reform will make practical English application of their studies. Fourthly, when, as in the case of the Scotchman George Buchanan,<sup>13</sup> these islanders confine themselves to pure scholarship, and the production of polite pseudo-classic literature, the result is empty. For their energy passed out from scholarship into politics, church reform, voyages of discovery and the creation of an English literature which was not classical. English scholarship had its ups and downs. The suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII cut off a considerable supply of funds used in the support of scholars at the Universities. Because of this the distraction and confusion of ecclesiastical changes, the cult of letters was unfavorably affected by the English Reformation during

<sup>13</sup>George Buchanan, 1506-1582 was Scotland's chief humanist, nor did any contemporary Englishman equal him in reputation. The ties were close between Scotland and France and at the age of fourteen Buchanan was sent to study in Paris. He spent the better part of twelve years studying and teaching at that University. After a brief visit to Scotland, he next is found spending three years at Bordeaux and five in Portugal, where he suffered at the hands of the Inquisition. But he had gained fame from his metrical Latin version of the Psalms which rendered them with pseudo-classic taste and feeling. This complete humanist returned to stay in Scotland at the age of fifty-five. He became a sort of court poet to the Queen of Scots and although a follower of the Reform preserved her favor. Upon Darnley's murder and Mary's marriage with Bothwell, and subsequent flight to England, Buchanan turned against her in his *Detectio*. He was afterwards tutor to the young King James, and wrote a Latin history of Scotland. His repute was great while he lived and for another century. But when one thinks of his metrical rendering of the Psalms and his great poem "De Sphaera," which was also written in classic metre and consecrated to a presentation of a rapidly exploding theory of the universe, one is impressed with the futility of his accomplishment.



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the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary<sup>14</sup> In Elizabeth's reign, especially the latter half, the genius of the time passed beyond the cult of classic letters, however much it had directly or indirectly drawn from them.

<sup>14</sup>Ascham's letters—e.g., Ep LXXIX (Giles' Ed.) of 1547 speak of the decline of learning at Cambridge. See more at large Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, II, I, Chapter XXXI, and II, II, Chapter XXIV.

## Chapter 2

### *The English Reformation· Wyclif*

**HISTORICAL EVENTS ARE** not always to be accepted under the tags which have been attached to them, nor for what their movers assumed or supposed them to be. The so-called English Reformation was not predominantly a religious movement having to do with the saving of souls and their lot in the world to come. Its chief dramatic incidents sprang from the political constitution of England. In its entire course it was a catholic expression of the taste and temper and the formative genius of the English people. It cannot be treated by itself, separate from the consideration of all the rest that made England. For it was a part and parcel of the whole, and scarcely more other worldly than the rest.

The Lutheran revolution was German, and the French Reform was French. But, among other obvious traits, one vital circumstance distinguishes them essentially from the English Reformation. The inspiration of the German Reformation, the explosion which it was, flared from the personality of perhaps the greatest of Germans, Martin Luther. The French Reform finds its form and culmination, its intensive actualization, in the work and genius of Calvin. In either case Luther or Calvin centres the human interest of the modern student upon himself. But the course of the English Reformation, unless at the very beginning in Wyclif, offers no man whose personal genius dominates and impels the story. It is a social, political, and if one will,

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religious, movement among a people, moulded by the political and social conditions of the country, and dominated by no single personality, except when temporarily driven by the passions and policy of Henry VIII. It has very little that is intellectually original, it borrows ideas from abroad, from any quarter. Its makers, the English people, were neither blessed nor burdened with abstract conceptions. In the end we find ourselves interested in the ecclesiastical-political-social form which is worked out.

The English Reformation so convincingly and amusingly English, was composite, even heterogeneous, in its antecedents and moving elements. Underlying, enveloping and through attraction or repulsion, affecting the whole movement was the Roman Catholic Church. Although this was to be cast loose from as an organization, it supplied the bulk of the doctrines which any reformed national Christian must retain. Assuming this Catholic matrix, a vital element of the reform was the "new learning" from abroad, both sides of it, secular and sacred—that is to say, the "new learning" in the sense of the humanistic revival and extension of classical studies, Greek as well as Latin and the "new learning" lying in the study of Old Testament Hebrew and New Testament Greek, and in the Pauline teachings of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and the legion of their followers. English factors were the indigenous Protestant tendencies, obscurely traceable to the tenets of Wyclif and the Lollards. An immediate efficient cause was the lust of Henry VIII and his desire for a son and heir. The vicissitudes of politics and the consolidation of the royal prerogatives under Henry VII had placed autocratic power in the hands of his successor and contributed to the realization of his will to supersede the Pope as Supreme Head of the English Church.

There were two long strains of preparatory and at last efficient forces entering the English reform of religion and separation from the Church of Rome—two strains which might collaborate, but more constantly exhibited intoler-

ance on the one side, and on the other dissent and occasional revolt. The one was the self-assertion of the English realm against papal encroachments,<sup>1</sup> the other the protest of an evangelical and independent conscience against an ecclesiastical authority which seemed both irrational and unjustified by the faith of Christ.

Both of these strains joined in Wyclif, at whose preaching, says Milton, 'all the succeeding reformers more effectually lighted their tapers.' That preaching, continues Milton, "was to his countrymen but a short blaze, soon damped and stifled by the pope and prelates for six or seven kings' reigns."<sup>2</sup>

There were gusts of righteous anger in the air which Wyclif breathed. Some one had experienced and given utterance to those powerful allegorical visions of human life, called after *Piers Plowman*.<sup>3</sup> They voiced the indignation of a man who saw, as the people should have seen, the clergy and laity in their evil shortcomings and haphazard repentances. One will find no obvious plan in these visions, but ample denunciations of all forms of greed and sham, and declarations of the worth of Truth, which lies in honest virtues and the soul practising them. The author recoiled as sharply from the spiritual falsity of absolution purveyed to the wicked through the Church, as from the sins which need the pardon that only repentance and right conduct can merit or receive. Christian verities are taught

<sup>1</sup> The course of the royal and parliamentary self-assertion of the realm expressed in statutes will be noticed as introductory to the statutes of Henry VIII. Post Chapter 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Of Reformation in England*.

<sup>3</sup> The authors one or several are unknown, or disputed. The massive edition is by Skeat in four volumes (Early Eng. Text Society). For a vivid presentation of its contents see Jusserand's *Piers Plowman* (Putnam's 1894). For discussion of authorship see J. M. Manly in the *Cambridge Hist. of Eng. Lit.*, and *The Piers Plowman Controversy* (Manly, Jusserand, Chambers Early Eng. Text Soc., 1910). The sincerity and power of these poems will impress any reader who can overcome his repugnance to alliterative verse which is as disagreeable to us as it was to Chaucer, and less familiar.

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by precept and by the illustrative drama of the vices virtues, and sorrows of a society composed of all sorts and conditions of men. The writer is very close to the Bible, and always gives the pregnant Scripture text which sums up his alliterative speech. He is English in the savor of his scenes and personages, as in his language and verse. The vision of the ills of laity and clergy does not bring him to rebel against king and state, or refuse obedience to the Church. Yet his words were taken as their own by rioters against the social orders and by rebels against the Church. It was no easier for these people than for the twentieth century historian, to distinguish between denunciations of the abuse and rebellion against the system on which it poisonously blossoms. This difficulty will recur in considering the career of Wyclif.

He appears as a half sculptured giant held in the rough marble. Yet, through a life of contest with surrounding acceptances and corruptions, he freed himself from the matrix of his earlier years, and emerged at last an egregious and prophetic heretic. The difficulties of the struggle, even the obstacles in the way of entering upon it at all, cannot be realized by us who live in a world divided between Catholics and Protestants of every hue. How should a man discover for himself that the atmosphere which he and all men breathe is poisonous? How should Wyclif, a child of mediaeval thought, begin to break away from universal acceptances? What spiritual fulcrum could he use, and on what outer certainty should he set it beyond the beliefs enveloping him? Whither should he revolt from a religious State controlling much of this world and salvation in the next? Following Wyclif's career, we see that even this man of new insight would not have broken with the universal Church, had not conditions prepared the way and events jostled him along. As for supposing him to have foreseen the outcome of his gradually shaped convictions, that is not to be thought of.

Wyclif belongs to England. Elsewhere his career could not have been what it was, nor could it have progressed

by the stages one observes in it. Yet only its earlier part seems manifestly a result of Wyclif's situation as an Englishman of academic station, and somewhat involved in politics. The later part is more disengaged, and more personal to the man who had finally become a religious reformer.

He was born at an undetermined place in England about the year 1320, he died at his parish of Lutterworth in Leicestershire on the thirty first day of December 1384.

His closing years of astonishing intellectual activity, of vehement advocacy of church and doctrinal reform, of bitter denunciation of Popes and Friars, were passed in this little town where he never suffered personal molestation, although a generation after his death his bones were cast out from his tomb by order of the Council of Constance. His earlier life, his education, his development prior to those last years of militant emancipation, are identified with Oxford,—he was master of Balliol in 1360. There he studied, taught, and wrote, and thence from time to time he was drawn to London by public business, or to stand trial.<sup>4</sup>

Wyclif's education made him a scholastic logician and theologian. Scholasticism is inseparable from its own scholastic Latin, in which it was expressed, its thoughts were unsuited to vernacular expression especially where the vernacular was English or German, and not a Romance tongue. When reasoning and writing in Latin Wyclif's style and method never cast off the scholastic bands. But in English he is another man. "Two virtues be in mannes soule by which a man should be ruled: holynesse in mannes wille, and good cunning in his witte. Holynesse should

<sup>4</sup>For the scanty and uncertain facts of Wyclif's life see G. Lechler *Johann von Wiclif und die Vorgeschichte der Reformation* (2 Vols. Leipzig 1873 also in Eng. translation) F. D. Matthiew *The English Works of Wyclif hitherto unprinted* Introduction (Early Eng. Text Soc. 1880 and 1902) W. W. Shirley *Fasciculi Zizaniorum* Introduction (Master of the Rolls Series 1858), G. M. Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wycliffe* (1899).

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put out sin, and good cunning should put out folly " Reading this, after Wyclif's scholastic Latin, is like entering a sunny field.<sup>5</sup>

So in his Latin treatises Wyclif, to the end of his days, never cast off the scholastic goutre afflicting the formal Latin compositions of his time His last elaborate Latin work, the *Trialogus*<sup>6</sup> completed the year of his death is a final compend of doctrine as to God and things divine in fact a concise *Summa Theologiae* The arrangement of its four books follows the four books of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. It is not easy reading, yet in its entirety bears interesting evidence of the whole Wyclif It shows that the major part of him and of what he taught came directly from his scholastic forbears, yet it contains the novel matters which made Wyclif's importance both in his own time and after These consisted of his incisive, heretical, clear seeing arguments against transubstantiation, the riches of the clergy, and against the Friars altogether, their principles, their teachings, and the foundations of their Orders, also against privy confession, priestly absolution, papal indulgences and many superstitions He had reached them in the course of controversies which may be briefly followed

In the year 1371 the Commons petitioned the Crown that the bishops should not hold great offices of state There was also talk of seizing their endowments The next

<sup>5</sup>Matthew Eng *works of Wyclif* On Confession, pp 327-345 While commonly the Latin of the theologians and controversialists of the fourteenth century is bad, the bad qualities vary somewhat with the education and nationality of the writer Dr R. L. Poole says that Wyclif's "Latin is base even as compared with that of such of his predecessors as Ockham there is a gulf between it and that of Thomas Aquinas Wycliffe in fact belongs to a time when scholars were ceasing to think in Latin. It is significant of his position that he is one of the founders of English prose-writing To understand his Latin it is often necessary to translate it into English" Preface to Dr Poole's edition of Wyclif's *De Civili Domina* (Wyclif Society 1883)

<sup>6</sup>Ed by Lechler (Macmillan, 1867)

year the coming of a papal collector turned popular distrust in the direction of Avignon. The Commons prayed the king to deprive any priest holding a benefice, when persistently guilty of immoral life. In 1374 a mission of which Wyclif was a member, was sent to Bruges to treat with papal envoys. There he seems to have won the confidence of John of Gaunt, the chief man in the realm since his brother, the Black Prince, had died and Edward III was old and imbecile. Gaunt was bent on confiscating the superfluous property of the Church, a measure which Wyclif advocated, having held for many years that the wickedness of the clergy annulled the Church's right to its possessions.<sup>7</sup> He had urged his opinions publicly at Oxford, and after his return from Bruges came up to London to preach clerical disendowment, apparently at the Duke's invitation. If he found ready listeners among all social grades, he also roused the wrath of the more masterful clergy, and was summoned for trial at St. Paul's, in Febru-

<sup>7</sup>Wyclif's arguments, partly borrowed from the recent *De pauperie Salvatoris* of Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh are curiously mediaeval and feudal. He defined *dominium* or lordship as a habit belonging to the rational nature in virtue of which it is said to be set over that which serves it. "God has lordship by reason of creation, possession by reason of conservation, and use by reason of governance. God is lord *not mediately* as other kings are through the rule of subject vassals since immediately and of himself he makes, maintains and governs all that which he possesses, and helps it to perform its works according to other uses which he requires." Every man holds from God by the tenure of obedience. In giving, God does not surrender His lordship, but gives possession and use. His grants are made "to men in their several stations and offices on condition of obedience to His commandments. Mortal sin, therefore, breaks the link, and deprives man of his authority. Thus no one in a state of mortal sin has, in strict right, either priesthood or lordship. This is the meaning of Wyclif's favorite expression, that all dominion is founded in grace." The last is from Shirley *Fasciculi Zizaniorum* Introduction, p. lxiii. The above translations are from R. L. Poole's edition of Wyclif's *De Dominio divino* (Wyclif Soc., 1890) who prints in an appendix the first four books of Fitzralph's *De pauperie Salvatoris*.



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ary 1377 He appeared supported by the Duke and Lord Percy, who were both intent upon depriving the mayor of London of his power over the city Hot words passed between these lords and the imperious Bishop Courtenay, till the excited crowd broke in, and the abortive trial ended in confusion The next day the Londoners drove the Duke and Lord Percy from the town Yet the defeat was not for long Edward III died in June, the Londoners and John of Gaunt came to terms, and the son of the Black Prince was crowned king as Richard II.

In the meanwhile Rome took up the conflict,—Gregory XI had migrated back to the Eternal City The pope was at war with Florence, and there had been recent friction between the papacy and the English government over the excommunication of the Florentines in England, whom the king took under his protection Papal Bulls arrived. One of them, addressed to the University of Oxford, prohibited it from permitting Wyclif to defend his teachings there, and commanded that he be arrested and delivered into the custody of the Bishop of London or the Archbishop of Canterbury they in turn were enjoined to warn the King against Wyclif's errors, to examine him and report to Rome, and keep him in prison till the papal decision was returned The matters of which he was accused related mainly to the order and governance of the Church he had questioned the powers of the pope to bind and loose, had maintained that excommunication if unjust had no effect, had urged the right of kings and lords to deprive the Church of its possessions when misused, and had questioned the exclusive privilege of the bishops to administer certain sacraments He was also charged with communism Marsiglio of Padua and John of Jandun were named as the sources of his false teachings

Men were just then occupied with the succession to the throne The government, with or without John of Gaunt, remained rather anti papal The bishops feared to move, while Wyclif already master of men's minds at Oxford, was becoming the popular champion of the realm against

papal encroachments. He defended himself before Parliament.<sup>8</sup> Probably his defense was well received since he was soon called on to advise the government "whether the realm of Edward may legitimately, under the need of providing for defense, keep its treasure from being drawn abroad, even though the pope commands it under pain of censures and in virtue of obedience."<sup>9</sup>

In his Response he says "Every natural body has power from God to resist its contrary, and preserve itself in its rightful being . . . Since therefore the realm of England, in the language of Scripture, ought to be one body, and the clergy, lords and Commonalty its members, it seems that the same realm has such power given from God"—and therefore may keep its treasure for its own defense when necessary. Then he argued that the Pope could not demand this treasure as alms under the gospel injunction of *caritas* because the title to the alms falls with the same necessity: "for since all *caritas* begins from itself, it would be no work of *caritas* but of folly to send the kingdom's alms to foreigners (*ad exteros*), the realm itself needing them."

With these and other arguments Wyclif combated the pope's right to drain the country of its treasure. He said the pope would be unlikely to lay an interdict on the realm, considering his love and our well known piety, "but supposing that Antichrist's disciple should break out in such insanity, one solace is that God does not desert those who hope in Him." An unjust and therefore invalid excommunication may work fear and damage, but such temporal trouble may be met. Christians are not bound to maintain the pope in pomp, and if it be said to be bad for the realm to keep so much loose money, let that be remedied by a prudent administration and distribution of church property, and a return of the endowments to the founders. He was setting forth sundry others matters of like tenor when silence was imposed on him.

<sup>8</sup>Shurley, *Fascic Zizaniorum* pp. 245-257.

<sup>9</sup>Wyclif's *Responsio* from which this and the following extracts are taken, is printed in Shurley, *Fas. Ziz.*, pp. 258-271.

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Wyclif's trial came to nothing. At Oxford the heads of the University would not proceed against its distinguished son, with whose opinions they were in sympathy. And when the abortive proceedings were re-opened before the bishops in London, the Princess of Wales, who was the mother of young Richard II and virtually regent, forbade Wyclif's condemnation, and a tumultuous inroad of London folk broke up the session. Wyclif was now an important person with the authorities and popular with the people.

In 1378 the Great Schism broke out, induced by the harsh ways of the newly elected Urban VI, and the lust of power on the part of the French cardinals. These made an Antipope, Clement VII, and set up a rival papacy in their congenial Avignon. Europe fell into two ecclesiastical camps, France and Spain supporting Clement, England and the Teutonic lands supporting Urban. Each pope proclaimed a crusade against the other, and rival venders of indulgences and pardons overspread Europe. This scandalous condition changed Wyclif's attitude toward the papacy. Having hitherto in all spiritual matters acknowledged the papal authority, he began to hold it an encumbrance and detriment to the Church of God. His religious energies seemed now to break forth in power, turning him altogether from politics to the reform of religious practices and doctrine.

One great reforming measure was his translation of the Gospels from the Vulgate into English. His efforts to render the Bible accessible to the people sprang from his zeal to spread the true religion disencumbered of its corruptions, and also accorded with the tendency of the time to turn from Latin to English in the conduct of both secular and spiritual affairs. Another effective and constructive measure lay in the training and sending out of "poor priests" to preach the English Bible to the English people. They were not necessarily poor in understanding or education, but it was theirs to realize Wyclif's conception of true Christian ministry through voluntary poverty and earnest preaching of the living faith. He worked untiringly

to send them forth equipped for their labors and devoted to their mission. The result must have cheered his last years of physical debility, for the poor priests brought the Gospel to the homes of thousands.

With Wyclif's evangelical activities his doctrinal dissent became more incisive and its promulgation more eager. He insisted upon the acceptance of Scripture as the sole authority in religion, he attacked the priestly power of issuing indulgences and granting absolution, and denied the priestly claim of transubstantiating bread and wine into the divine body and blood of Christ.

The last denial was a clear heresy, biting at the root of the divine or miraculous power given to the Church, if the miracle of the Mass was imposture, around what function might the Church assemble its authority? Good churchmen, moreover, might here take up the gauntlet without fear, the matter being purely doctrinal and disconnected with abuses which laid the Church open to attack. Wyclif's teaching was condemned at Oxford, probably in 1381, and on his appeal to the king (not to pope or bishop) John of Gaunt sent to forbid him to say more upon this subject. But Wyclif only stated his position the more clearly,<sup>10</sup> and the University still supported him. The Friars were ranged against him, and from this time he became unbounded in his denunciation of them and their corruptions.

In the year 1381 the rebellion of the peasants of the Eastern counties broke out under Wat Tyler, "John Ball" and other leaders. The preaching of Wyclif's followers against the wealth of the clergy may have fallen as a spark into the explosive mass of discontent and destitution. Much destruction of church property, some murders of church dignitaries, followed, before the rebellion was bloodily put down. It probably affected Wyclif as the revolt of the German peasants affected Luther, making him more conservative in his political views and more careful of his utterances.

<sup>10</sup>In his *Confessio* printed in *Festschrift*, pp. 115-132.

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After all this turmoil Archbishop Courtenay (Archbishop Sudbury's head had been cut off by the rioters) summoned a synod in May 1382 at Blackfriars. There Wyclif's teachings on the Eucharist and other matters were condemned but with no mention of Wyclif by name. The storm fell upon his supporters at Oxford and elsewhere. Wyclif himself apparently unmolested retired to Lutterworth where he died two years later in 1384. These two closing years of physical weakness for he was partly paralyzed were the period in which he most completely expressed his convictions.

Wyclif's doctrine of divine and civil lordship was pointed with ever increasing acerbity against the excessive possessions of the Church and the secular power of the pope.<sup>11</sup> Thereupon he developed the principle that the Bible alone is the authoritative vehicle of God's truth: everything in the Church going beyond it is useless and erroneous while whatever contravenes it is damnably false. In studying it, he would follow the light of reason and also the authority of the Church Fathers, who are fallible however. Scripture should be understood as a whole so that one part may explain another. And the Holy Spirit must guide our efforts.<sup>12</sup> It was his habit, especially in his sermons, to

<sup>11</sup>Cf. *ante* page 43 note. The *Dialogus sive Speculum Ecclesie militantis* ed. by Alfred W. Pollard (W. Socy 1886) was written between 1379 and 1382 and is mainly directed against clerical ownership of property. In the last year of his life Wyclif wrote a letter to Pope Urban (printed in *Far Zix* p. 241). The following is a contemporary translation of a passage: "Thus I take as hool some counseil that the pope levee his worldly lordship to worldly lordis, as Crist gaf hom and move spedely all his clerkis to do so." *Select English Works of John Wyclif* ed. by T. Arnold (Oxford, 1871) Vol. 3 p. 505. Wyclif had already said in his *De Civili Dominio* i. 17 "For to rule temporal possessions after a civil manner to conquer kingdoms and exact tributes appertain to earthly lordship not to the Pope so that if he pass by and set as de the office of spiritual rule and entangle himself in those other concerns, his work is not only superfluous but also contrary to holy Scripture." (R. L. Poole's translation.)

<sup>12</sup> See Lechler's *Wyclif* (Eng. trans.) I pp. 473-483.

give the literal sense of the English Scriptural text which he had quoted and then to follow with its allegorical application in simple and temperate fashion

Some time after the papal and episcopal attack on him, he gave out a defense in his condemned *Conclusions* in a Latin and an English version <sup>13</sup> In the latter, having shown that priests should content themselves with alms and not "curse" for their tithes, and that all holding cures should perform the duties of their posts, and that God's unadulterated law should be preached in the tongue understood of the peoples, he continues

"For we should take as belief that goddes lawe passeth alle other, both in autorite and in truthe and in wit First in autorite, for as god passeth men, so goddes lawe must passe in autorite mannus lawe and therefore god bade his apostlis not to preche mannus lawe but for to preche the gospel to all maner of men Much more ben they to blame that prechen japes and lies, for goddes word is more wholesome to men since it is belief, and it techeth to follow crist, and that must each man do that shal be saved, and therefore thinke we thereon night and day, both wakinge and slepinge, for when other lawes may have ende then it shall dwell in bliss and the heart of this lawe is the gospel of iesu crist. Preche prestes this heart to men and teche them to love crist, for he is cursed that loveth him not and sueth [followeth] him not, as Paul saith And certes that prest is to blame that should so freely have the gospel and leeveth the preching thereof and turneth hym to mannus fables"

He denounces the Friars "Why should not men flee from these false prophets as Christ biddeth in the gospel?

<sup>13</sup> The Latin form was published by Lechler (Leipsic, 1863) *Johannis de Wicl' Tractatus de Officio Pastoralis* and the English is in *Matthew Eng Works of W* hitherto unpublished pp 405 457

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But Bulls of the court of Rome blinden many men here, for it seemeth the head of error and proper nest of antichrist "Antichrist cannot show that Christ ordained these orders of clergy, these "new rotten sects" of monks and canons 'No man should sue (follow) either pope or bishop or any angel, but in as much as he sueth Christ." <sup>14</sup>

Wyclif was opposed to gorgeous ceremonial, which he dubs *judaizing* after the ways of carnal sense, and placing the symbol above the meaning. He set his face against the worship of images, which entangle the imagination. Herein lay the peril, the poison of idolatry (*venenum idolatrie*), beneath the honey, drawing men to adore the image (*signum*) in the place of what it signifies. <sup>15</sup> He thought ill of the many saints' festivals and the worship of relics and deemed that men would do better to observe the precepts of God at home than go pilgrimaging to the threshold of the Saints. He also drew away from worship of the Virgin, which in earlier years he had approved, and from much of the Church's teaching as to Purgatory: it might be that the suffrages of the Church helped the dead, but the least good deed of the dead man would help him more. <sup>16</sup> It was also his opinion that while the virgin state

<sup>14</sup> "Ordo vel religio catholica quam Christus instituit, excelsit omnes istos ordines quodammodo infinite" *Trilogus* Lib IV cap 33 cf ib cap 24 *et seq* Wyclif also argues that the king and not the pope should appoint prelates

<sup>15</sup> *Liber Mandatorum* as given by Lechler, o c I p 356

<sup>16</sup> See Lechler o c pp 563 564

Christ's Church "hath three parts. The first part is in bliss with Christ head of the Church and containeth angels and blessed men that now ben in heaven. The second part of this church be saints in purgatorie and these sin not of the new but purge their old sins. And many erours fallen in praying for these saints and sith they alle been dead in bodi. Christ's words may be taken of them—sue (follow) we Christ in oure lif and let the dead bury the deade. The third part of the Church be true men that here live that shall be after saved in heaven and live here Christen men's lives" Arnold o c Vol 3 p 339,—In the same tract Wyclif opines (p 344) that many a canonized man is deep damned: the pope is very fallible

might be the very highest, it were better for most people, including priests, to marry <sup>17</sup>

There is no doubt that Wyclif became more hostile to the papacy from the time of the Schism, the popes' "uncouth dissension" as he called it.<sup>18</sup> About 1380, he wrote a tract against the pope in which the term Antichrist is freely used <sup>19</sup>

"It were to wit besides how God shewed love to his Church by division of these popes that is now lately fallen. Our belief teacheth by Paul that all things fall to good to God's children that dread him, and thus should Christian men take them And so some men take it that the holy prayer of the church made to Christ and his mother moveth him to send this grace down to divide the head of Antichrist, so that his falsehood be more known And it seemeth to them that the pope is antichrist here on earth For he is against Christ both in life and in lore Christ was most poor man from his birth to his death, and left worldly riches and begging, after the state of innocence, but antichrist against this from the time that he be made pope till the time that he be dead here, coveteth to be worldly rich and casteth by many shrewd ways how that he may thus be rich Christ was most meke man, and bade learn this of him, but men say that the pope is most proud man of earth and maketh lords to kiss his feet where Christ washed his Apostles' feet. Christ was most homely [familiar] man in life, in deed and in word, men say that this pope is not next Christ in this, for where Christ went on his feet both to cities and little towns, they say this pope will be closed in a castle with great array "

<sup>17</sup>Cf. a tract "Of wedded men and wives" Arnold, *Select Eng Works* etc. Vol. 3 pp. 188-201—which may have been the work of a Wicliffe. Also Lechler o. c., I pp. 571, 572.

<sup>18</sup>Arnold o. c. 3 p. 242. It is a pity that Marsiglio and Occam and Wyclif did not perceive that Constantine's Donation was a forgery.

<sup>19</sup>Printed in Matthew o. c., pp. 458-482.



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Wyclif continues through a series of telling contrasts between the ways of Christ and the ways of popes as he knew of them. As for the Schism, "this division of these popes may turn to good of many realms, that men trow to neither of them, but, for love of Jesus Christ, in as much as they suen [follow] Christ in their life and in their lore." If the realms would obey the pope only in so far as he followed God's law they would be free from the "blasphemies of indulgences and of other false feignings, for it may fall that the pope grant to rich men that they should go straight to heaven without pain of purgatory, and deny this to poor men, keep they never so god's law."

In another tract,<sup>20</sup> probably written in the last year of his life, Wyclif, having argued against the pope's infallibility and shown that monks, canons and friars act more like servants to Antichrist than of the Apostles, points out that Peter had no more power than the other apostles:

"Christian men believe that Peter and Paul and other apostles took power from Christ, but only to edify the Church. And thus all priests that be Christ's knights have power of him to this end. Which of them hath most power is fully vain of us to treat, but we suppose of priests' deeds that he that profiteth more to the Church hath more power of Christ, and else they be idle with their power. And thus by power that Christ gave Peter may no man prove that this priest, the which is bishop of Rome, hath more power than other priests."

After a while Wyclif shows how little Christian men should fear interdicts or excommunications or crusades, which can "do no harm to a Christian man but if he do harm first to himself . . . And thus dread we them not for censures that they feign, but dread we ever our God lest we sin against him."

Of Confession Wyclif speaks temperately. The practice has varied, says he

"For first men confessed to God and to the common people, and this confession was used in the times of the apostles. Afterwards men were confessed more especially to priests, and made them judges and counsellors of their sinful lives. But in the third time since the fiend was loosed, pope Innocent <sup>21</sup> ordained a law of confession that each man once a year should privily be confessed of his proper priest, and added much to this law that he could not ground. And if this pope's ordinance do much good to many men, natheless many men think that it harmeth the Church." <sup>22</sup>

Auricular confession pointed to absolution by the priest, the falsehood and demoralizing effects of which Wyclif never tired of denouncing. Privy confession is an innovation of the fiend, and a device to subject men to the pope. To grant absolution belongs to God. "a priest should not say 'I assol,' when he know not whether God assol." <sup>23</sup> The confessors of great men are highly paid, those with whom the rich treat privily as to their sins, from whom, also privily, they are wont to receive evil counsel, as they make confession without contrition, to the damnation of both parties.

"thus sin might be bought for money as one buys an ox or a cow; and so rich men had occasion to dread not for to sin, when they might for a little money be thus assol'd of all their sins, and poor men might despair, for they had not to buy thus sin. And he that trusteth to popes' bulls or assolings from pain and sin, or other words of confessors that they feign besides God's law, is foolishly deceived in his belief and hope, but we should believe that the grace of God is so great and plenteous that if a man sin never so much nor so long in his life, if he will ask God's mercy and be contrite

<sup>21</sup>Innocent IV at the Lateran council of 1213

<sup>22</sup>Arnold o. c., Vol. 3 p. 255, in a long tract on the Schism.

<sup>23</sup>Matthew, o. c. pp. 327-345

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for his sin, God will forgive him his sins without such japes feigned of priests. But be men ware of this peril, that continuance of man's sin without sorrow and displeaunce will make his sin hard and bereeve him of power to sorrow therefore and to get mercy, and thus men should ever dread sin and flee to knit [make fast] *on to another for when a man sinks in the mire at the last he may not help himself*." Yet Wyclif returns to the thought that secret repentance may atone for sins of conscience, "men should understand that the courtesy of God asketh not of each man to shrive him thus by voice of mouth." <sup>24</sup>

Denunciation of the feigned miraculous power of priests and pope was one path by which Wyclif advanced to his denial that the natural elements in the Eucharist were changed. No false teaching "was ever more cunningly brought in by hypocrites, or cheats the people in more ways." <sup>25</sup> Moreover, transubstantiation disturbed his scholastic reasoning upon substance and accidents. He says in a Latin sermon "It seems enough for the Christian to believe that the body of Christ is in some spiritual and sacramental manner at every point of the consecrated host and that next after God honor is to be chiefly rendered to that body, and in the third place to that sensible sacrament, as to an image or tomb of Christ." <sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup>Touching the supererogatory merits of the saints on which the pope might draw, Wyclif's words are full of scorn. "And so this fond fantasy of spiritual treasure in heaven that each pope is made dispenser of this treasure at his own will this is a light word, dreamed without ground. For then each pope should be lord of this heavenly treasure and so he should be lord of Christ and other saints in heaven, yea if he were a fiend, as was Judas Iscariot." Arnold o. c. Vol. 3 p. 262.

<sup>25</sup>*Trilogus* IV, 2. Matthew's translation.

<sup>26</sup>Matthew o. c. p. xxii where the Latin is given and from where I have taken the above translation. Wyclif's *Confessio Fidei* 115-132 states his position elaborately. The following extract will be understood by anyone interested in these attempted formulations of a magic-mystery. Non tamen audeo dicere quod Corpus

The *Wyckett*, a popular controversial tract questionably ascribed to Wyclif, stript the mystery from all the sacraments, including the Eucharist

"Therefore all the sacramentes that be lefte here in earth be but myndes of the body of Christ, for a sacrament is no more to saye, but a sygne or mynde of a thyng pased or a thyng to come, for when Jesu spake of the breade and sayde to his disciples, *As ye do this thyng do it in mynde of me* (Luke xxii) Also Christ sayeth (John xv) *I am a very vyne* Wherefore worshyppe ye not the vyne for God as ye do the bread? Wherein was Christ a very vyne, or wherein was the bread Christ's bodye? In figurative speech, which is hid to the understanding of synners Then if Christ became not a material either [or] an earthly vyne, neither material vyne became the bodye of Christ. So neither the material bread was changed from his substance to the flesh and body of Christ."

Christi est essentialiter substantialiter corporaliter, vel identice ille panis. Credimus enim quod triplex est modus essendi corporis Christi in hostia consecrata, scilicet virtualis spiritualis et sacramentalis. Virtualis est quo bene facit per totum suum dominium secundum bona naturae vel gratiae. Modus autem essendi spiritualis est quo corpus Christi est in eucharistia et sacris per gratiam. Et tertius modus essendi sacramentalis quo corpus Christi est singulariter in hostia consecrata.

## Chapter 3

### Lollardy and Pecock and Gascoigne

IT MAY HAVE BEEN, as Milton says, that Wyclif's preaching "was to his countrymen but a short blaze, soon damped and stifled" Yet we shall find his true succession not merely in such lights of the subsequent reformation as Latimer and Hooper, but in the English people themselves, as in the stirrings of the Puritan movement, with its hatred of prelacy and "Judaizing" ceremonial and its insistence upon Scripture as the *sum and limit of religious truth* Of a surety these tendencies had lived on after Wyclif's death, 'damped' to be sure, but hardly "stifled"

His followers were soon called Lollards, a name of unknown origin It is hard to see in them more than faintly glowing embers,—or their time was not yet come Far and wide the realm was dominantly, but not violently, orthodox Innovations in belief were not favored. Men and women were accustomed to being 'assoiled' by priests and Friars, and needed just such solemn tinsel of assurance, especially when they came to die Indulgences, relics, pilgrimages were popular People are not readily disturbed in beliefs and practices which are well suited to their unenlightenment As for the Mass, it was the central authoritative saving miracle, attack upon it or any paring down of its efficiency roused anger Here and there men perceived the dupery by which Friars and Pardoners filled their pouches But there was little indignation Few are so keen-minded as to be angered by what is monstrous only to the

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mind. For wide-spread wrath, men's passions must be roused: their money must be taken in ways and for persons they dislike. Some general hatred of the popes or the priests and the prelates of the land was roused by tithes and other exactions, or hungry eyes were cast on the fat abbey lands. Thus it had been with the tumultuous mob ranging with John Ball and Wat Tyler.

Again, the English people did not like to persecute or be persecuted. They were not cruel or intolerant in that way, nor as yet stifnecked. In 1382, relying on an ordinance passed by the king and lords, Richard sent writs to the Bishops commanding them to arrest all Lollards. The Commons objected vigorously, till they compelled the recall of the ordinance in which they had not concurred. "Let it now be annulled, for it was not the intention of the Commons to be tried for heresy, nor to bind over themselves or their descendants to the prelates more than their ancestors had been in time past."<sup>1</sup> Only after some years could the Commons be brought to take steps against the Lollard heresy, by passing the statute *De Haeretico Comburendo* in 1401.

Nor on their side did the Lollards wish to be burnt for their convictions. They evaded persecution as they might, or usually recanted when caught in its grip. Conflicts were neither stubborn nor embittered, in comparison with religious wars or persecutions elsewhere. It may be that their dissenting opinions were not clear enough to die for. In fine there was little zeal either to inflict or endure martyrdom. Lollardy never spread so far in England as to invite foreign Catholic intervention. The trouble mercifully remained a family affair, and the horrible embroiling factors of national or racial hate did not burst in and make the hell of England which the invasion of northern Catholics had made of Provence in the Albigensian Crusade, or which rancor between Czechs and Germans was to make

of Bohemia in the generation following Wyclif's death

As for the substance of Lollardy, that consisted of Wyclif's teachings.<sup>2</sup> But it was a Wyclifism always tending to disintegrate, become desultory and unreasonable. It clung to Scripture rather crudely understood, it protested against images and ceremonies, it detested popery and prelacy, and in a general way conformity. This 'lay party' lacked organization, its adherents lacked education and intelligence, and that enormous experience and knowledge of human nature which rounded out the Roman Catholic Church, and gave it stability even in its abuses. If Lollardy was some sort of evangelical purification of Catholic Christianity, it also afforded proof, if such was needed, that society cannot be conducted on principles which lack the wisdom of the world.

Undoubtedly as the fourteenth century passed into the fifteenth, a large number of men were known as Lollards, among whom the more intelligent held themselves Wyclif's followers. They were chiefly laity of the common sort, with here and there a priest strayed from his pasturage, or a layman of position. Such was Sir John Oldcastle, who doughtily refused to admit his errors, and with his armed friends and followers made some sort of blind assault upon authority in the reign of Henry V. He was at last executed in 1417,<sup>3</sup> and a number of his adherents. This did much to finish Lollardy as a tangible movement, religious, social or political. Its doctrines were loosely maintained in the so-called 'lay party,' a term, which aptly designated a tendency among plain Englishmen to distrust priests and prelates, and think them not entitled to their emoluments when they failed egregiously in their duties, or a tendency to rely on the direct reading of Scripture and to regard excessive worship of images as idolatry.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Lollard Conclusions* of about the year 1394 printed in *Fasciculi Zizaniorum* (Master of Rolls Series) ed. by Shirley, and in Gee and Hardy, *Documents illustrative of English Church History* (1914) pp. 126-132.

<sup>3</sup> On Oldcastle see Gairdner, *Lollardy* etc. I pp. 72-809.

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The reading of Scripture by the laity in their own tongue, and the circulation of translations made by Wyclif, are uncertain and thorny topics. The English reading public was extremely limited, and French quite as much as English was the language of the Court and high nobility, though doubtless not of country squires. Gower wrote as lengthily in French and Latin as in English, and his English works, as well as those of Geoffrey Chaucer, were not made public before Wyclif's death. Nevertheless there is some evidence of English versions of parts of Scripture possibly preceding those which probably Wyclif made and had his "poor priests" use when preaching. But it is improbable that his translations extended beyond the Gospels. As for the ecclesiastical attitude, the proof is somewhat lame that the Catholic Church opposed the reading of Scripture by the laity, under proper supervision, but the Church authorities forbade as they were able the putting of unlicensed versions into the hands of ignorant persons who might be misled and mislead others. And of necessity the Church set its face against the right of the individual to interpret Scripture after his own mind, and stand by it against authority.<sup>4</sup>

There was more learning, and occasionally a broader-mindedness, among the opponents of Lollardy. One of these was Thomas Netter of Walden as he is usually called after his native town in Essex, a Carmelite and confessor to Henry V. A zealous opponent of the Wycliffites or Lollards, he has given a convenient synopsis of their teachings in his chief work against them.<sup>5</sup> An opponent of the "lay party," far more interesting intellectually, was Bishop Pecock, whose character was as supple as his mind. He opposed Lollardy and defended the Church in its practices,

<sup>4</sup> The matter is briefly discussed by Gardner *Lollardy* &c. I, p. 100 sqq. Gasquet, *Pre Reformation English Bible* (1895) argues that the extant versions known as Wycliffite are authorized Catholic translations. The subject is obscure and lends itself to temperamental argument.

<sup>5</sup> See Gardner *Lollardy* &c. I p. 86 sqq.



even in its abuses, possibly with ill-judged officiousness, and certainly with dangerous arguments, which in the end brought this curious person within scorching distance of the stake. His career has its ludicrous elements.

The year and place of birth of Reginald Pecoek, sometime Lord Bishop of Chichester, are unknown. He was undoubtedly a Welshman. His boyhood is alleged to have been studious. Election to a fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford, in 1417 is the first definitely known point of his career. In due time he passed from acolyte and deacon to priest. At the same time pursuing his studies sacred and profane with ardor and success, he was made Bachelor of Divinity. Afterwards summoned to court, he became useful to princes and received the first of various sleek preferments from the "good," but none too good, Duke Humphrey Plantagenet, Protector of the kingdom. Pecoek now wrote many books, which refuted the errors of the Lollards, and were pleasing to those whom it was well to please. His fortunes blossomed cheerily, and he was made bishop of St. Asaph in 1444, through the Protector's influence. Two or three years later he defended somewhat over zealously or over speciously the order of bishops, to which he was pleased to belong. Not only Wyclif and the Lollards, but earnest priests of unblemished standing held that the decline of preaching was owing to the example and indeed to the precepts of the bishops led by his Grace of Canterbury. Save with themselves, the bishops were not popular. Pecoek pleaded for them in a famous sermon, maintaining that their loftier duties freed them from the burden of preaching, and likewise from the obligation of residence, since Court or Parliament might need their talents. He vindicated also the papal right of provisional preferment to benefices not yet vacant. In fine he upheld what serious men regarded as the manifest abuses of the hierarchy. So pleased was he with his own discourse that he wrote it out in the form of conclusions, and sent them to his friends, deeming that they would be held true by all men learned in divinity and the Canon Law. The result

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proved otherwise, when denunciation rather than acclaim broke forth from both the learned and the ignorant. Attempts were made to censure him, but the episcopal authorities showed themselves lenient to this error, even though soon afterwards it came to him to speak slightly of the authority of the great Church Fathers.

Pecock himself was not a lazy bishop but a preacher as well as writer. He seems to have believed in the positions taken in his argument, which in fact accorded with the practices of his order. So he continued writing, producing many tracts. His prejudices and circumstances led on to the composition of his most interesting work, the *Repressor of overmuch blaming* (wytyng was the old word he used) *the clergy*. In that he vindicated his opinions with arguments verily leading back through Abaelard to the *De divisione naturae* of Erigena, and with the occasional employment of such critical historic insight as had not been shown by Occam or Marsiglio or Wyclif, or any man indeed except Lorentius Valla, who about the same time likewise was exposing the spuriousness of 'Constantine's Donation'. Before relating Pecock's further rise and luckless downfall it were well to make some mention of the contents of his book.<sup>6</sup>

The *Repressor* primarily directs itself against those tenets of the 'lay party' (i.e. the Lollards) which make Scripture to be the sole and sufficient rule of life, and hold

<sup>6</sup> Pecock's *Repressor* is edited with an introduction, by C. Babington in the Rolls Series (1860). A full account of the book is given in Gairdner's *Lollardy and the Reformation* etc., Vol. I p. 202 sqq. (Macmillan, 1908). Pecock in *Repressor* pp. 350-366 argues at some length against the truth of the story of the reproofing angel's voice at the time when Constantine made his Donation, and then against the historical fact of any such great donation having been made by Constantine. He is seeking to show that the temporalities of the Church came unproved by any angel's voice, from other times and sources. Very different was the intent of Valla's *De falso credita Constantini donatione*, which by closer criticism showed that document to have been a forgery. Pecock wrote a few years later than Valla, but without knowledge of the latter's argument.

that meek and godly and ignorant man can understand Scripture as well as the educated clergy. By overthrowing this position, Pecock prepares the way for a full justification of many clerical practices and ordinances which are not, explicitly at least, commanded by Scripture. His attack upon the scriptural fetishism of the lay party and his exalting of reason's *doom of kinde* (the judgment of the law of reason), and the education and skill pertaining to its due exercise, is of interest as well as portent. For these tenets of the "lay party" were to exercise enormous influence, and even reach dominance in Puritan England, while in Pecock's book we hear two voices opposing them, the one voice that of tradition and church usage, and the other that of reason implanted in man but duly trained by the accepted discipline and accumulated wisdom of the ages.

The first error of his lay party is that Christians should hold no "governaunce" (ordinance) to be "the service or the law of God, save it which is grounded in Holy Scripture." They are set so fast in this

"trowing or holding that whenever any clerk affermeth to them any governaunce contrary to their wit or plesaunce, though it be full open and full surely in doom of reason, and therefore surely in moral law of kinde, which is law of God for to be done, yet they anon asken, 'Where groundest thou it in the New Testament?' or in the Old 'in such place which is not by the New Testament revoked?'"

The second error in which they are set is

"that whatever Christian man or woman be meek in spirit and will for to understand truly Holy Scripture, shall without fail find the true understanding of Holy Scripture in whatever place he or she shall read and study, though it be in the Apocalypse or anywhere else, and the more meek he or she be, the sooner he or she shall come into the very true and due understanding of it."

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And the third error is that these meek understanders will listen to no argument from any clerk.

Pecock proceeds to set out as counter considerations the value of logic and the irrefragible conclusion of the syllogism, "though all the angels in heaven would say and hold that thilk conclusion were not true" He deemed it would be a great advantage if the common people might study logic in their mother tongue All this, however, is but preliminary to the deeper rationalism of his argument. Herein in the first place he argues that it is not the office of Scripture to "ground any governaunce of deed or service of God, or any law of God or any truth, which man's reason by nature may find, learn and know" Pecock's positions are more interesting than his arguments in their support, for these are often cumbered with redundant logic, and the form is not as good as that of thirteenth century scholasticism. His polemic sometimes gets the better of his humor, as when in showing that Scripture does not contain all that is needed for man's guidance, he points out the meagreness of its teaching upon matrimony, amounting not to "the hundredth part of the teaching upon matrimony which I teach in my book on matrimony, and yet who will read will find the teaching of that book little enough or over little for to teach all that is necessary to be learned and known upon matrimony"

While Scripture does not *ground* the things of reason it requires and assumes the use of reason. If Scripture bids a man be just to his neighbor, reason teacheth him the same, and what justice is must be found in reason and not in Scripture Christ changed the ceremonial law of the Old Testament, but not the moral law, but added some new sacraments And the said law of kinde was before both Testaments, and was "not grounded in Holy Scripture, but in the book of the law of kinde written in men's souls with the finger of God"

Having established his first main conclusion, Pecock puts the following portentous corollary,

"that whenever in Holy Scripture or out of Holy Scripture be written any point of any governaunce of the said law of kinde it is more verily written in the book of man's soul than in the outward book of parchment or velum, and if any seeming discord be betwixt the words written in the outward book of Holy Scripture and the doom of reason written in man's soul and heart, the words so written ought to be expounded and interpreted and brought for to accord with the doom of reason in thilk matter, and the doom of reason ought not for to be expounded, glossed, interpreted and brought for to accord with the said outward wring in Holy Scripture "

Evidently the uninterpreted letter of Scripture is not the supreme law with Pecock

Although Scripture is not the ground of "natural or moral governaunce or truth unto whose finding, learning, and knowing man's reason may by himself come," nevertheless it witnesseth these ordinances and truths not grounded in it, reminding and exorting men to perform and fulfil the same. Pecock further concludes that "the whole office and work into which God ordained Holy Scripture is for to ground articles of faith and for to rehearse and witness moral truths of law of kinde grounded in moral philosophy, that is to say in the doom of reason." <sup>7</sup> And the greater part of God's law for man on earth is grounded "in the inward book of the law of kinde and of moral philosophy," the truths for example, that there is one God, creator of all, that man is made for an end which is union with God. On the other hand, without moral philosophy no man can know the whole law of God. So all unlearned persons of the lay party ought to make much of the clerks who are learned in moral philosophy,

<sup>7</sup> Pecock seems to go back to *Dans Scotus* for his position "that the faculty of the said moral philosophy and the faculty of pure divinity or the Holy Scripture be two diverse faculties, each of them having his proper bounds and marks, and each of them having his proper truths and conclusions."

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that the clerks may help them rightly to understand Scripture

Then as it were to comfort and assure himself of the validity of his positions, Pecoock boldly puts forth these words

"If any man make of Holy Scripture and apprise it, even as truth is and no more than truth is, God is therein pleased, and if any man will make of Holy Scripture or any creature in heaven or in earth more than truth is, God is therein displeased And further thus If any man be feared lest he trespass to God if he will make over little of Holy Scripture, which is the outward writing of the Old Testament and the New, I ask why is he not afear'd lest he make over little and apprise over little the inward Scripture of the before spoken law of kinde written by God himself in man's soul, when he made man's soul to his image and likeness? Of which inward Scripture Paul speaketh, Romans ii. For certes this inward book or Scripture of law of kinde is more necessary to Christian men, and is more worthy than is the outward Bible and the cunning thereof, as far as they both treat of the more part of God's law to man."

Long before Pecoock's time scholastic theologians, including the great Aquinas, had exalted the *lex naturalis* above the decrees of secular and even ecclesiastical authority Its source was the *summa ratio in Deo existens*, as Aquinas puts it, which man may perceive by the light or judgment of his natural reason,—an idea which is not far removed in significance from Pecoock's *doom of kinde*. Unconditional supremacy was ascribed to this *lex naturalis*, even as the same was ascribed to the *jus divinum* revealed in Holy Scripture These two supremacies had been kept in close accord. But Pecoock's argumentation with its emphasis on the inward Scripture of the law of kind, in contrast or possible opposition with "the outward Bible," opened yawning gulfs of rationalism,—and such were not closed by our author's handling of the objection

that experience often shows that judgments of reason are fallible, whereas "Holy Scripture is a reverend thing and worthy, since by and from it the Christian Church of God taketh her faith " It is possible moreover that our bishop was not free from inconsistency in despising the narrow trust in Scripture of unaided and unteachable ignorance, and yet relying on the sometimes fatal "doom of reason" guided by policy and interest and passion. One cannot refrain from quoting a passage of great interest and even charm, in which he points to the danger of rash Bible reading. A "great cause," says he, of the errors of the "lay party" is this,

"that the reading in the Bible, namely in the historical [narrative] parts of the Old Testament and of the New, is much delectable and sweet, and draweth the readers into a devotion and a love of God, and from love and deinite [delight] of the world . . . And then because the said reading was to them so graceful and so delectable, and the said end so profitable, it fell into their conceit for to trow full soon . . . that God had made or purveyed the Bible to men's behoof after or by the uttermost degree of his power and cunning for to so ordain, and therefore all the whole Bible (or as some trowed, the New Testament) should contain all that is to be done in the law and service to God by Christian men, without need to have therewith any doctrine. And . . . soothly it has been said to me thus, 'that never man erred by reading or studying in the Bible' . . . notwithstanding that there is no book written in the world by which a man shall rather [sooner] take occasion for to err "

Pecock thought there was a dearth of clergy learned in logic, moral philosophy and divinity, to expound Scripture, hence heresy had become rife among the laity,—and the king would have been better occupied in rooting it out than in conquering France. The subsequent three parts of his book (we have been drawing only from part

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I) are devoted to the defense (as against the lay party) of images and pilgrimages, of the revenues of the clergy, of the ranks and degrees among the clergy, of the lawfulness of papal and episcopal decrees, and of the religious orders. Evidently the matter of this book contained very much that should have been pleasing to the church authorities, yet for its dangerous arguments and for its author's views unguardedly expressed elsewhere, this zealous prelate was brought to grief. But not immediately, for he was translated to the richer see of Chichester in 1450, through the interest of the Duke of Suffolk and the Bishop of Norwich who were suspected of complicity in the supposed murder of Duke Humphrey, Pecoock's former patron! The downfall of these hated lords left him defenceless and detested. He was then writing his *Treatise on Faith*, in which he was again busy sustaining the clergy by arguments that rather tended to undermine their infallible authority and possibly shadowed forth religious toleration! He was a man not altogether fortunate in his arguments and his zeal. The hate of the lords temporal and spiritual broke out against him in a council at Westminster in 1457. It was said that he had pooh-poohed the Doctors of the Church, had made a new creed of his own. Pecoock and his books were brought up for examination before the Archbishop at Lambeth. We are not very credibly informed as to the actual dispute, and the method and substance of his examination. The accounts are from his enemies. He was condemned for many of his conclusions, the archbishop in a curious closing speech (as reported not very reliably), offering him the choice of public abjuration or being made "as the food of fire and fuel for the burning."

Naturally, perhaps one may say pitifully, he elected to abjure his errors, and before a vast crowd at Paul's Cross, made a full recantation and abject confession of error and presumption, and with his own hand delivered his books to be burned. His works were also burnt at Oxford, and doggerel verses expressed the contempt in



which men chose to hold him. After various appeals and measures, the shorn heretic was consigned to permanent detention in a chamber of the abbey of Thorney in Cambridgeshire.<sup>8</sup>

Much of our information regarding Pecock comes from the *Liber Veritatum* (otherwise called *Dictionarium Theologicum*) of an orthodox contemporary who hated him well, Doctor Thomas Gascoigne.<sup>9</sup> Pecock may have been in this Doctor's mind when the latter was defining 'Hæreticus' in his Dictionary, and stating as the first characteristic of the tribe that they do not follow the authority of the Scriptures but the pointings (*sensum*) of human reason. They are men of lust, yet endowed with ardent and acute minds, for only men so gifted can construct a heresy, and they change from one contrary error to another.

Gascoigne was a man of birth and property, greatly respected at his university of Oxford, where he was chosen chancellor more than once, his integrity and his loyalty to church and crown were above all cavil. This exemplary doctor's *Dictionarium* gives a motley picture of the ecclesiastical debasement of his times. Its illustrations are vivid and direct, and filled with varied interest and entertainment as he tells of the preferment of boys and drunken fools to bishoprics, and of a bishop drawing revenue from the concubinage of his clergy.<sup>10</sup> The author opposed the Lollards and also detested their opponent Pecock, he was a fearless and constant denouncer of those evils which later moved Luther to revolt, to wit, papal pardons, in-

<sup>8</sup> For these uncertain facts see Babington's Introduction, and R. L. Poole's article in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Apparently Pecock's examination dwelt mainly on matters other than those arousing our interest in him.

<sup>9</sup> Edited with a full introduction by Thorold Rogers (Oxford, 1881). Dr Gardner gives much of interest from it in his *Lollardy*, etc. I p. 243 sqq.

<sup>10</sup> Gower in *Mirour de l'Homme* lines 20149-20160 speaks of deans drawing revenue from harlots. Macaulay's ed. of Gower; French Works (Clarendon Press).

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dulgences, and dispensations from onerous duties<sup>11</sup> Also he set an *example of abstention from the fruits of ecclesiastical abuses*, plural preferments and the like For the reform of all these evils he could find no place but Rome to look to, and at the same time he was convinced that the condition of the papal court was such that nothing good could come from it He had no thought of revolt, and an extract from his book will show how utter and how sweeping and yet how devoid either of revolutionary intent, or of hope of reform within the Church, might be the rebukes and upbraidings of a churchman

<sup>1</sup> For Rome as a singular and chief wild beast has laid waste the vineyard of the Church, by reserving to themselves [i e to the Roman Cuna] the elections of the bishops, that none may confer an episcopal church on anyone unless he first pay the annates or firstfruits and revenue of the vacant church Likewise she has destroyed the vineyard of the Church of God by annulling the elections of all bishops in England. Likewise she destroys the Church by promoting evil men as the king and himself [i e the Pope] agree Likewise Rome as a wild beast has ravaged the churches by annulling all the elections of bishops made in cathedral churches, ordaining that all elections of bishops pertain to the Apostolic Chamber, to wit, to the decision of the pope and his cardinals Likewise because Rome does not name anyone bishop save whom the pope and cardinals choose as bishop or archbishop, having rendered and prepaid at Rome thousands of marks in fruits and having made gifts to the Roman or papal courtiers "

Time and again Gascoigne declares and instances his proofs, that the pope, even if he would, dared not take measures for reform, from fear of poison or death by open violence

<sup>11</sup> See pp 76 sqq., 86 sqq., 92 sqq., and 118 sqq of Roger's edition.

This much has been said of Pecock and Gascoigne because they are interesting people, and also in order to cover the barrenness of the record of the "lay party" through the fifteenth century. Yet one feels or may infer its inarticulate existence, representing in those disturbed and bloody English decades a certain laicizing of life and opinion in England, as opposed to sacerdotalism or ecclesiasticism, and perhaps monkery. There was scant feeling that church lands were sacrosanct. In 1410 the Commons petitioned for their confiscation in part or altogether; and through this century far fewer monasteries were founded, while foundations of hospitals and schools and colleges increased. Undoubtedly by the time of Henry VIII's accession, there was a wide lay intelligence in England, instructed or largely ignorant, yet prepared for the acceptance of Protestant ideas from the Continent, and ready at the royal behest to separate from papal Rome.

## Chapter 4

### Social Discontent and Lutheran Influence: Tyndale

#### I

TURNING THE PAGES OF GASCOIGNE, one hears the resonant echoes of ancient denunciations—of mankind, of knights and bourgeoisie, and so often of the Church. These satires or denunciations might be general or specifically pointed at the particular abuse or crime. Much also has been recorded, or more lately has been written, upon the state of the Church in England, and especially upon the state of its monasteries, at the time when Henry VIII bestrode the throne. Yet just how good or bad the Church and its monasteries were, one queries still.

The Church had been and still was part of English society, in which the gentry were the favorite sons, and estates were inherited from one generation to the next. The landed classes furnished the Church's maintenance, and the nobility and gentry put their younger sons and needy relations into the bishoprics and other goodly benefices. This regular operation of family interest was but one removed from the law of inheritance of secular landed estates. It was much the same in Germany and elsewhere. The condition of the Church paralleled that of society at large, it was not abnormally bad, but merely permeated with normal human slackness, selfishness, materialism and ignorance, with occasional instances of a better energy and enlightenment in its upper or lower orders.

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The monasteries possessed large revenues or small, the deans managed their fat lands, or subsisted leanly, generally they lived slackly enough and like normal human beings, were disinclined to exert themselves beyond the goading of their needs. The monasteries also exercised charity and hospitality, and the richer ones provided funds for the support of scholars at the universities. Probably the poorer monasteries were spiritually the more squalid and inert.

Sadly general statements these, sounding like truisms! the clergy are part of society, and made what they are by education, convention and environment, they are good or bad but on the whole tending by virtue of their education, to be a little better than the corresponding upper or middle classes from which they are drawn. And as one part of society is jealous of another, and not apt to sympathize with its difficulties and temptations, so the laity tended to be captious as to the clergy, and to envy them the wealth which they did not seem to earn. It was thus in England, as we might assume, if we were not so informed.

The matter may, however, be regarded in another light. There come times when some order in society fails to function in correspondence with the demands of society at large. Or the ideas conventionally represented by a certain order may no longer meet the best thoughts of contemporaries. This touches the clergy and their functions. The needs of society, and its somewhat clearer or advancing ideas, may pass beyond the current observances and practices of the Church. And therefore, from this point of view, the question of church abuses and clerical corruption resolves itself into the question whether the habits of the clergy and the methods and institutions of the established religion fittingly correspond with the ideas, and meet the needs, of the time. An answer in the negative means that Church and clergy are no longer suited to the time, and reform is needed. Contemporary verdicts will declare that Church and clergy are corrupt.

The clergy may be as good, as moral, as the laity, or even better, but methods and institutions, and perhaps principles of belief, need refashioning. What is called for, is the application of intelligence and the best available knowledge in matters of religion.

In fact, to make one more general statement before turning to specific illustration of the English situation, it may be said that the German, French, and English reformations represent intellectual advance, rather than moral or religious improvement, except as the latter is involved in the former. For example, to give up image worship, relics, pilgrimages, and indeed to renounce the authority of the Roman bishop, was to become more intelligent, rather than better.

In the reign of Henry VIII two currents, or perhaps three, of popular criticism assailed the established Church. Distinguishable in origin, in their working they tended to unite. The one was the surviving loosely heterodox dissent of the so-called "lay party", which was no longer (if it ever was) a "party," or anything so concrete and articulate. The other current, confusedly Lutheran or Zwinglian, came from the Continent, where it also may have had its ancient sources. But in England it represented the "new learning." Thirdly, if one will, social and economic discontent, the stress of poverty, the sense of disadvantage. This was aggravated by the enclosure of parks and pastures by great proprietors, which dispossessed many tenants, and by the middle of the sixteenth century, may have thrown out of employment ten per cent of the Kingdom's population.<sup>1</sup> Such sense of poverty and

<sup>1</sup> A tract on "the decay of England by the great multitude of sheep" (Early Eng. Text. Soc. Extra series XIII) written about 1550 in the reign of Edward VI shows with statistics and calculations the vast number of *plows* rendered idle by the enclosing of arable land for pasture. See also on the economic evils of Edward's time Crowley's *Petition against the Oppressors of the Poor Commons* in Strype *Ecclesiastical Memorials* II, II, p. 217 (Chapter XVII), also *ib.* II, II, Chapter XXIII.

oppression had always made part of the indigenous condemnation of the clergy's wealth, and readily combined with the 'new learning' when it came from the Continent. Indeed one may say that most reforms which have issued out of Christianity against its own corruptions, as they have been called for by the avarice and lusts of priests and prelates and rich seculars so have they carried the motive of relieving the distress of the poor. In some way they all seem popular movements, and to represent some assertion of popular rights as against the oppression of the rich. So had it been with Wyclif and the Lollards, so was it with the Lutheran reform, in spite of Luther's violent protests, and so was it to be in England. Thus, although distinguishable, these three factors in English sixteenth century disaffection toward the Church often joined together, and became as indigenous soil, with native harrowings and foreign informing seed.

It was none too easy for clever contemporaries to distinguish them, and dispute arose as to which cause to ascribe the dissatisfaction (the degree was in dispute) with the Church. A notable debate took place between a clever lawyer, Saint-German, and Sir Thomas More, in the years 1532 and 1533, when the King already had proceeded far in his conflict with the pope. Saint-German contended that "the division between spiritualite and temporalite," in other words, the laity's dissatisfaction with the wealth and luxury of the clergy, was both general and of long standing, while More insisted that it was special or local, and of recent origin. "The division is nothing such as thus man makes it, and is grown as great as it is only since Tyndale's books and Frith's and Friar Barnes' began to be spread abroad."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The tracts in question are Christopher Saint-German's *Dyalogue in English between a Student of Law and a Doctor of Divinity. A Treatise concerning the division between the spiritualite and temporalite. A Dyalogue between two Englishmen whereof one is called Salem and the other Bizance* and More's *Apology and Debellacyon of Salem and Bizance*. The controversy is given in Gasquet, *Edge of the Reformation*.

Probably Saint-German was right in contending that the disaffection was old, in its roots at least, and that it was then general, and More was doubtless right in ascribing its current prevalence largely to the recently disseminated literature. That contained social protest as well as religious novelty; yet the proportions varied with the writers. Instances may be given first of those in which the social protest outbulks all else, and then of those in which principles of religious reform are clear and trenchant.

To the former belongs the famous *Supplication of Beggars* written by one Simon Fish about the year 1528 or 1529, who had already fled the kingdom, through fear of Cardinal Wolsey. For the Cardinal was enraged against him for acting in a play a part which travestied his Grace. Then he wrote the *Supplication of Beggars*, which Henry VIII came by and secretly read. Henry liked the book so well that he sent word to Fish that he could safely return to the realm, which is a proof that it was a diatribe against the clergy, and had no theological heresy; for Henry was as jealous of his orthodoxy as he was open to complaints against the Church which he was battering.

The burden of the piece is the oppression of the poor through the wealth, avarice, and extortion of the clergy. They are no shepherds, but ravenous wolves, all of them.

"Bishops, Abbots, Priors, Deacons, Archdeacons, Suffragans, Priests, Monks, Canons, Friars, Pardoners, and Somners. And who is able to number this idle ravenous sort, which (setting all labor aside) have begged so unfortunatly that they have gotten into their hands more than a third part of your Realm. The goodliest lordships, manors, lands and territories are theirs. Besides this, they have the tenth part of all the corn, meadow, pasture, grass, wool, colts, calves, lambs, pigs, geese, and chickens of every servant's wages milk, honey, wax, cheese and butter. Yea, and they look so narrowly upon their profits, that the



poor wives must be countable to them of every tenth egg or else she getteth not her rights at Easter, shall be taken as an heretic . . . What money pull they in by probates of testaments, privity tithes . . . and at their first masses? Every man and childe that is buried must pay somewhat for masses and diriges to be sung for him or else they will accuse the dead's friends and executors of heresy "

The invective, which is addressed to the King, passes on to other exactions, and the enormous mulcting of the Realm by the begging Friars. The clergy get half the revenues of the entire Realm. And they are bad. No man's wife or daughter is safe from them, none may for certain know his own child. They draw women from their husbands, and spread disease. Why should not you, the King, punish them as you do other men? Through them, your people are beggars and thieves. They are stronger in Parliament than yourself. Who dares lay any charge against them, when 'so captive are your laws unto them, that no man that they list to excommunicate, may be admitted to sue any action in any of your courts "

The only color for these exactions is "that they say that they pray for us to God, to deliver our souls out of the pains of purgatory " But many learned men deem purgatory "a thing invented by the covetousness of the spirituality " The only remedy is to be rid of them. "Tie these holy idle thieves to the carts, to be whipped naked about every market town till they fall to labor, that they, by their importunate begging take not away the alms that the good Christian people would give unto us sore, impotent, miserable people, your bedesmen " Then shall crime and poverty diminish, your people shall obey you, the marriage vows shall be kept, the commons increase in numbers and in wealth, and the gospel shall be preached.<sup>3</sup>

This exaggerated diatribe is only here and there hereti-

<sup>3</sup> Edited by J. M. Cowper, Early English Text Society, Extra Series XIII (1871)

cal, as when it hints that priests were better married, and that purgatory is their invention, also in its implication that they do not preach the gospel. Yet Sir Thomas More, in the lengthy answer which he immediately wrote, seized upon this denial of purgatory as his starting point. He termed his tract *The Supplication of Souls*, and opened it with the heart rending cry of souls in Purgatory, "poor prisoners of God," imploring their late spouses, kindred and companions not to forget them, but "rather by your good and charitable means vouchsafe to deliver us hence." Purgatory was indeed a cardinal Catholic doctrine, and quite as essential for the lengthening of the Church's purse as for the shortening of the pains of the departed. More devotedly upheld purgatory, as he did every Catholic doctrine.

Any attack upon clerical abuses or extortions was likely to disparage some doctrine of the Church. Whether the disparagement was incidental or a direct assault, would usually depend on the writer's interest, since he was not likely to be an unconditional acceptor of Church teachings. In the sixteenth century any active opponent of Church abuses was apt to be a heretic, or liable to become one. This holds true of the authors of tracts against the clergy, and even of those which were occupied with economic abuses and the misery of the people. Belonging to the latter was the *Complaynt of Roderic Mors*, "sometime a gray friar" by Henry Brinklow, written in 1542.<sup>4</sup> Its premise is that all men should obey the laws of Prince and Parliament when not contrary to God's law, even then none should resist violently, but suffer death rather than obey. The theme of the tract is the economic distress caused by oppressive or improper laws and practices. Between the year 1529, when the *Supplication of Beggars* appeared, and 1542, the date of the "Complaynt," Henry had wrenched England from the papacy, and had permitted changes in the services of the Church, as the

<sup>4</sup> Early Eng. Text Soc., Extra Series XXII.

mood was on him, or foreign relations served. But usually with vigorous hand he upheld Catholic doctrine and smote rash innovators, as will be seen hereafter. The monasteries had been suppressed, and their lands seized by the King, or delivered to his followers, who would hold them fast and become a power in the realm opposed to papal restoration.

The *Complaynt of Roderic Mors* first directs itself against those wicked recipients of abbey lands who have raised the rents, or evicted the tenants who could show no leases. "What a shame is this to the whole realm, that we say we have received the Gospel of Christ, and yet it is worse now in this matter than it was over fifty or three score years, when we had but the Pope's law, as wicked as it was, for then leases were not known." This means that in the former times landlords, lay and spiritual, commonly accepted such rents as the tenants, from father to son had paid. The new landlords were squeezing the last penny from the land.

'Look well upon this, ye Christian burgesses, for this inhansing of rents is not only against the common wealth, but also, at length, shall be the chiefest decay of the principal commodity of this realm. For why? This inordinate inhansing of rents . . . must needs make all things dear, as well pertaining to the back as to the belly, to the most great damage of all the King's subjects, landed men only except." Brinklow argues that the raising of the rents is the root of all economic evils. If they were reduced, English cloth could be produced more cheaply, and would find a better market. With high prices 'everyone eateth out another' "

Another trouble is the forfeiting of the lands or goods of those who are executed for treason or other crime, by which their wives and children are reduced to poverty. Another is the enclosing of parks, forests and chases, and the deer destroy the neighboring crops, while a man may be hanged for killing the beast devouring his corn or grass. "The thing is too manifest. God grant the King grace to

pull up a great part of his own parks, and to compel his lords, knights, and gentlemen to pull up all theirs by the roots and to let out the ground to the people at such reasonable price as they may live at [by] their hands  
Ye lords, see that ye abuse not the blessing of the riches and power which God has lent you, and remember, that the earth is the Lords, and not yours "

The tract passes to the abuse of the selling of wards for ill assorted marriages, by which adultery increases, then to the old story of the law's delay and cost, and the pitiful state of prisoners lodged like hogs, lying in prison for years without trial. Moreover, when men are accused by the bishops for their preaching, they should not be suffered to lie in the Bishops' prisons, which are the prisons of their accusers 'Why should not both parties be put in prison till the matter be tried, as well as one?' Then the bishops would not be so hasty in accusing

He turns again to the Church lands 'When an Antichrist of Rome durst openly . . . walk up and down through England," he and his children had the wit to get the best lands there, and goodly parsonages and vicarages Yet alms were given, through the monks and the distress of the poor relieved, who now utterly lack support. By the confiscation of the abbey lands, the matter is mended as the devil mended the old woman's leg, by breaking it altogether! 'My lord parsons' are thieves and robbers, who entered not by the door of the sheepfold but by act of Parliament, and the temporal landlords now even exceed the spirituality in covetousness

The tract wanders on through the varied abuses troubling the realm, and turns to the need of reform in religion which was unreformed enough in these last years of Henry VIII, in spite of severance from Rome Let men leave off calling upon creatures in heaven and earth, and worship one God only and rely on one mediator, Jesus Christ Away with holy days and idols and images, and auricular confession. Let the priests marry, if they will. 'But now through God's help, to bring these godly

acts to a good and godly purpose ye must first down with all your vain chantries \* all your proud colleges of canons, and specially your forked wolves the bishops leave them no temporal possessions, but only a competent living Now for the good of these chantries colleges, and bishops, for the Lord's sake take no example at the distribution of the abbey goods and lands but look rather for your erudition to the godly *politic* of the Christian Germans in this case"—a last recommendation disclosing the influence of the German reform upon the writer He points out how the bishops' wealth should be distributed among the poor of city and country, with part of it given to the King

But the "pope's shavelings" still blaspheme Holy Writ, and men are imprisoned for reading it. "The pope remaineth wholly still in England save only that his name is banished. For why? his body (which be the bishops and other shavelings) doth not only remain but also his tail which be his filthy traditions, wicked laws and beggarly ceremonies yea and the whole body of his pestiferous canon law" Every bishop now is pope and antichrist! And never were they so eager to defend the pope as since the King took from him the tribute The body of the realm is still oppressed. We remain "in a perpetual bondage and spiritual captivity" The tract closes with a cry to England to wake from sleep, lest her blood be upon her head

This long tract was written in those years of Henry's cruel reactionary orthodoxy, as was the same writer's later "Lamentation of a Christian against the City of London" which was printed in Nuremberg in 1545 \* Its cry has become even shriller, its cry against idolatry, and lament for the rejection of Christ's Testament. The bishops are abominations and the greatest idol is the Mass "Do ye not see how the whore of Babylon hath altered the

\* Where masses were sung for souls in purgatory

† Early Eng. Text Soc. Extra Series XXXII.

supper of the Lord, which was instituted to have the blessed Passion in continual remembrance?"

Two "Supplications" also belong to these last repressive years of Henry, when the poor may have felt the oppression of the bishops and many beneficed clergy as bitterly as ever in the days when the pope was still the ghostly lord of England. Both tracts are anonymous. The one, belonging to the year 1544 is entitled "A Supplication to our most Sovereaign Lorde Kynge Henry the Eyght", and the other, of the year before Henry died (1546) is entitled "A Supplication of the Poore Commons".<sup>†</sup> Both denounce the ignorance, slothfulness, avarice and oppressive wealth of the clergy, and the laws which load them with unearned benefices, and forbid the poor to read the Word of God. It is "the crafty policy of the clergy to keep the knowledge of God's Word from all men, that they might indulge their avarice and iniquities",—and thus nourish the ungodly trust in masses for the dead by which men are impoverished. Even the studies of the clergy may work ill. "It is a dangerous thing to admit one to be a spiritual pastor, whose profession and study all his youth hath been in decrees and popish laws. For such a study, for the most part, engendereth a popish heart." The King should abolish the great lordships of the bishops, who live like heathen princes, having too much worldly business and authority. If this were reformed, faith would abound.

The second tract denounces those same "sturdy beggars" as it calls the clergy, and inveighs against the statutes which permitted only the wealthy laity to have a Bible in their houses, and forbade men to read the Scriptures in the Churches during service. Curious laws we think them, to prevent the misunderstanding of Scripture! Words of reproachful warning are addressed to the king

<sup>†</sup> Both printed in Early Eng. Text Soc., Extra Series XIII.

"Oh gracious Prince, here are we, your natural and most obedient liege people, constrained to forget (with all humble subjection we speak it) that we are of no ture and by the ordinance of God your most bounden subjects, and to call to remembrance that by our second birth we are your brothers and fellow servants (although in a much inferior ministry) in the household of the Lord our God. We beseech you (most dear Sovereign) even in the hope you have in the redemption by Christ, that you call to remembrance that dreadful day, when your Highness shall stand before the judgment seat of God in no more reputation than one of those miserable creatures which do now daily die in the streets for lack of their due portion wherewith you and your nobles do reward those anatomical elbow-hangers, your chaplains."

The author tells a story of one of these parasitical chaplains riding abroad for his pasture, having with him, as his custom was a scroll in which were written the names of the parishes of which he was the parson.

"He espied a church standing upon a fair hill pleasantly beset with groves and plain fields, the goodly green meadows lying beneath by the banks of a crystalline river garnished with willows, poplars, palm trees [sallows] and alders, most beautiful to behold. This vigilant pastor, taken with the sight of this territorial paradise, said unto a servant of his 'Robin,' said he, 'yonder benefice standeth very pleasantly, I would it were mine.' The servant answered, 'Why sir,' quoth he 'it is your own benefice,' and named the parish."

The tract turns grimly to the greed of those who have the abbey lands: it bids the King remember his hoary hair,—surely he would desire to leave a Common Weale to his son: and not an island of brute beasts: it bids him also beware of God's judgment: 'For the blood of all

them that, through your negligence shall perish, shall be required at your hand "

These protesters and dissenters may be taken to represent currents of English social and religious disaffection coming down from Wyclif. As there had been continuous or sporadic strains of protest against the doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church, so after Henry's breach with Rome, there continued or arose like strains of protest against the established Church of England, which acted with as high a hand, and, at the close of Henry's reign, still carried well nigh the whole volume of Catholic doctrine, not to say superstition—as will be noted more particularly. From the time, however, that the Lutheran revolt broke out in Germany, and a corresponding movement began in Switzerland and France, English dissent was stimulated and informed by ideas from the Continent, and indeed blown up into a flame by them, as Sir Thomas More said. From that moment it becomes difficult to distinguish indigenous English thoughts, though one can readily identify as continental certain conceptions, like that of justification by faith.

A general idea of what these recalcitrants were supposed to hold and teach may be gathered from articles of accusation brought by ecclesiastical authorities, who represented, in the first instance selected, the Roman Catholic Church, and in the second, the Church of England. Humphrey Monmouth was a wealthy London draper, who had entertained John Tyndale and furnished funds for printing (on the Continent) his English translation of Scripture, and other books in English. This was shortly after the year 1521 when Luther was proclaimed a heretic in England, and his writings and opinions prohibited. In May 1528 Sir Thomas More and another of the Privy Counsel made search in Monmouth's house for forbidden books, committed Monmouth to the Tower, and laid charges against him in twenty-four articles.<sup>8</sup> These ac-

<sup>8</sup> Given in Strype *Ecclesiastical Memorials* I, I p. 488 of Oxford ed. of 1822, p. 317 in older edition.



cused him of adhering to the heresies of Luther, and possessing his books, and causing them to be translated, of assisting Tyndale and others to translate the Bible, of being concerned with the printing of detestable books beyond the seas against the Sacrament of the Altar and the observance of the Mass, of eating flesh in Lent, of affirming that faith, without works, is sufficient to save, of alleging that the Constitutions of the Church did not bind men, of maintaining that we should pray only to God and not to the saints, that pilgrimages were unprofitable, that men should "*not offer to images in the church, nor set any light before them,*" that confession was unnecessary, that fasts need not be kept, that papal pardons are nugatory. Monmouth made his defense, and may have been saved by the turn of the tide. At all events he lived to die nine years later, leaving a pious will which would not have been to the taste of those who had committed him to the Tower.\*

Probably some eight years after Monmouth's committal, the Clergy of the Lower House in the Canterbury convocation acknowledging the King's Highness to be the "Supreme Head of the Church of England, according to the commandment of God," and speaking doughtily of the "Bishop of Rome" and his "usurped authority," nevertheless proceeded to protest certain errors and abuses that the sacrament of the altar is not esteemed, and people speak lightly of it, that extreme unction is denied to be a sacrament, and that priests are held to have no more authority to administer sacraments than laymen. Likewise it is held that all church ceremonies, not expressly directed by Scripture, should be abolished, that those are antichrists who refuse the cup to the laity, "that a man hath no free will", that God gives no knowledge of Scripture to the rich, that vows are contrary to Christ's religion, that priests should have wives, that the saints'

\* His petition of defense and his will are given in Strype's *C. H.* I, II (appendix No. LXXXIX and XC)

images are not to be revered, and that it is plain idolatry to set lights before them, that one may christen a child in a tub of water at home, "that the priests' crowns are the whore's marks of Babylon, that the stole about the priest's neck is nothing else but the Bishop of Rome's rope", that it is no sin to eat meat in Lent and on Good Friday; that auricular confession, absolution and penance are unprofitable, "that bishops, ordinaries, and ecclesiastical judges have no authority to give any sentence of excommunication . . . nor yet to absolve from the same", that churches are but conveniences to assemble in, and burials in church yards are vain, that the mass is only a deluding of the people, that saints are not to be invoked, *for they know nothing of our prayers and cannot mediate between us and God*, that there is no purgatory, but departed souls go straight to heaven or hell, that hallowed water, holy days, pilgrimages, fasts, and alms are vain, *that it is sufficient to believe, without good works, 'that no human constitutions or laws do bind any Christian man, but such as be in the Gospel, Paul's Epistle, or in the New Testament.'*"

## II

The absorption of Lutheran and even Zwinglian elements by an ardent reforming Englishman is exemplified in William Tyndale. He appears to have been born not later than 1490, and is said by Foxe to have been "brought up from a child in the university of Oxford, where he, by long continuance, grew up, and increased as well in the knowledge of tongues and other liberal arts, as especially in the knowledge of the Scriptures, whereunto his mind was singularly addicted." He also became a reader of Erasmus, and translated his *Enchiridion*. But the desire to render the Bible into English burned within him, till translation of Scripture became the labor of his life. In London he was entertained, as has been said by Humphrey Monmouth, who, with other merchants, sur-

nished him with funds for the journey to the Continent, which he undertook in order to obtain counsel in his work and have the fruit of his labor printed in safety. He was at Wittenberg with Luther in 1524, and stayed at Marburg, Cologne, and Worms, but spent most of his last years in Antwerp, where in the end he was decoyed into the hands of imperial officers, and was burnt for a heretic in 1536.

Tyndale made his translations from the Greek and Hebrew, and his vigorous renderings, pruned and corrected, form the basis of the "authorized version." His New Testament, printed at Worms, was brought into England in 1526, where the bishops, led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, took measures to suppress it. The bishop of London notified his clergy that "many children of iniquity, maintainers of Luther's sect, blinded through extreme wickedness and wandering from the way of truth and the Catholic faith, craftily have translated the New Testament into our English tongue, intermeddling therewith many heretical articles and erroneous opinions, pernicious and offensive, seducing the simple people, attempting by their wicked and perverse interpretations to profane the majesty of the Scripture which hitherto hath remained undefiled, and craftily to abuse the most holy Word of God and the true sense of the same" 10

England was still part of the papal church and its prelates were of one mind as to the suppression of unsanctioned translations of the Bible which might impugn some part of the established doctrine. Tyndale's work, besides its alleged heretical renderings, stung them with its marginal comments. He took his stand on the authority of Scripture and labored to set it before his countrymen according to his best understanding and interpretation of the text. That was his mission. He had no intention of expressing novelness of his own. Yet as he grasped the

10 As cited by Gardner *Lollardy &c.* II p. 228 citing "Foxe IV 666-7."

Scriptural meanings afresh and for himself, and doubtless was affected by Lutheran influence, his rendering was not likely to accord fully with the Catholic interpretation. He had a sound perception of the historical sense of Scripture, and sound ideas as to the limits of allegorical interpretation. The former appears, for example, in the Prologue to his translation of the Pentateuch

"Behold how soberly, and how circumspectly, both Abraham and also Isaac behave themselves among infidels. Abraham buyeth that which might have been given him for nought, to cut off occasions. Isaac, when his wells, which he had digged, were taken from him, maketh room and resisteth not. Moreover they ear and sow, and feed their cattle, and make confederations, and take perpetual truce, and do all the outward things, even as they do who have no faith, for God hath not made us to be idle in this world "

In plain straight English he continues setting forth the acts and character of Jacob

In his Prologue to Leviticus he warns against the beguilement of allegories, whether in the Old Testament or the New. This matter should be handled sensibly. Allegories prove nothing—and by allegories understand examples or similitudes borrowed of strange matters and of another thing than thou entrest of. But the very use of allegories is to declare and open a text, that it may be the better perceived and understood."<sup>11</sup>

He can state admirably the plain lessons of the palpable sense of Scripture, and he is Pauline and Lutheran with respect to faith and works. "But thou reader," says he in his prologue to the Prophet Jonas, "think of the law of God, how that it is altogether spiritual and so spiritual that it is never fulfilled with deeds or works, until they flow out of thine heart, with as great love

<sup>11</sup> In his *Obedience of the Christian man* p. 339 sqq. Tyndale speaks aptly concerning allegories which men devise for illustration and instruction's sake, yet knowing that they prove nothing.

toward thine neighbour, for no deserving of his, yea though he be thine enemy, as Christ loved thee, and died for thee for no deserving of thine, but even when thou wast his enemy "

Although more English, which is to say, less extreme and less logical than Luther, Tyndale holds to faith rather than to works. As he says in his tract, *The Wicked Mammon* "That faith only before all works and without all merits, by Christ's only, justifieth and setteth us at peace with God, is proved by Paul in the first chapter to the Romans " But faith brings forth works naturally, and as of course, or it is a vain false faith, and the man "an unprofitable babbler " Both faith and works with Tyndale, as with Luther, are gifts of God. In the same tract he says "All good works must be done freely with a single eye, without respect of any thing and that no profit be sought thereby " But as good works naturally follow upon faith, so eternal life naturally follows upon faith and goodly living, without the seeking, just as hell naturally follows sin without the seeking. A Christian "feeleth that good works are nothing but the fruits of love, compassion, mercifulness, and of a tenderness of heart which a Christian has to his neighbour, and that love springeth of that love which he has to God "

Tyndale was no utter follower of Luther. His views upon that momentous question of the nature of Eucharist, which rent the religious bowels of the sixteenth century, were rather those of Zwingli. Or we may say that his English protestantism harked back to Wyclif, and that he thus inherited his conception of the sacrament of the altar which resembled that of the Swiss reformer. As a good Wycliffite, Lollard, or what one will, Tyndale stood on the authority of Scripture as the law of God for man. In his way, as a good Englishman of the Tudor period (or a good Lutheran of Luther's age!) he next stood firmly on the principle of obedience to the King. This he inculcated as part of the natural law and constitution of human society in his *Obedience of a Christian Man*, a

discursive repetitious treatise, in which he writes with power, but shows the inferiority of his composition to the compactness and serned ordering of Luther's writings.

Obedience is due from children to parents, from wives to husbands, from subjects to princes "The King is in this world without law, and may at his lust do right or wrong, and shall give account but to God only" Again "Princes are in God's stead, and may not be resisted, do they never so evil, they must be reserved unto the wrath of God Nevertheless, if they command to do evil, we must then disobey and say, we are otherwise commanded of God but not to rise against them" God giveth the father power over his children, the husband over his wife "And even in like manner as God maketh the King head over his realm, even so giveth he him commandment to execute the laws upon all men indifferently The King is but a servant to execute the law of God, and not to rule after his own imagination"

The pope's authority is vain against the King's it cannot exempt monks and friars from their obedience to the King "God did not put Peter only under the temporal sword, but also Christ himself" (citing Gal. iv, Mat. iii). The pope has no authority from Christ except to preach God's word, and Tyndale finds no power in pope or prelate to constitute a holiness of observance and ceremonial.

"Ye blind guides, said Christ, ye strain out a gnat and swallow a camel Do not our blind guides stumble at a straw, and leap over a block, making narrow consciences at trifles, and at matters of weight none at all? If any of them happen to swallow his spittle, or any of the water wherewith he washed his mouth ere he go to Mass, or touch the Sacrament with his nose . or happen to handle it with any of his fingers which are not anointed, or say *Alleluia* instead of *Laus tibi Domine*, or *Ite missa est* instead of *Benedicamus Domino*, or pour too much wine in the chalice, or read the gospel without light, or make not his crosses aright,

how trembleth he! How feareth he! What an horrible sin is committed! 'I cry God mercy,' saith he, 'and you my ghostly father.' But to hold an whore, or another man's wife, to buy a benefice, to set one realm at variance with another, and to cause twenty thousand men to die in a day, is but a trifle and a pastime with them."

The true doctrine is otherwise

"When a man feeleth that his heart consenteth unto the law of God, and feeleth himself meek, patient, courteous, and merciful to his neighbour, altered and fashioned like unto Christ, why should he doubt but that God hath forgiven him, and put his Spirit in him, though he never cram his sin into the priest's ear?

To whom a man trespasseth, unto him he ought to confess. But to confess myself unto thee, O Antichrist, whom I have not offended, am I not bound?"

*The Obedience of a Christian Man* appeared in 1528, and however displeasing to pope and prelate, it was quite acceptable to Henry, then about to assert his authority against the pope. But Tyndale was no safe royal prop. Two or three years later, his *Practice of Prelates* vehemently roused the King's displeasure, for it argued against his divorce, and declared as its first head that "Prelates, appointed to preach Christ, may not leave God's word, and minister temporal offices, but ought to teach the lay people the right way, and let them alone with all temporal business."

There are few novel thoughts in Tyndale. He knew the thinking of his day, and knew and felt his English antecedents. He was imbued with the common fund of Christian dogma and teaching, as held in the creeds and in the Gospel. All this made up his mental equipment. But he also felt the situation in which he moved, and his feelings like those of all would be reformers reset and re-expressed the fund of thought at his disposal. He may be regarded as an English expression of Reform. He was practical, he could not be captured by any one prin-

ciple, by any single syllogism, such as justification by faith. He would make room for all pressing considerations, especially those harmonizing with his prejudices. If he was influenced by Luther, he also comes straight down from Wyclif.

A caustic light is thrown upon the personality and situation of Tyndale and of those who wrote and argued on that side, from the impression made by these men and their writings upon their most illustrious antagonist.

'Howbeit, there be swine that receive no learning, but to defile it, and there be dogs that rend all good learning with their teeth. To such dogs men may not only preach, but must with whips and bats beat them well and keep them from tearing of good learning with their teeth. till they lie still and hearken what is said unto them. And by such means be both swine kept from doing harm, and dogs fall sometimes so well to learning, that they can stand upon their hinder feet, and hold their hands afore them pretetely [prettily] like a maid, yea, and learn to dance after their master's pipe, such an effectual thing is punishment, whereas bare teaching will not suffice. And who be now more properly such dogs, than be those hereticks that bark against the blessed sacraments, and tear with their dogs' teach [sic—is it 'teaching' or 'teeth?'] the catholic Christian faith, and godly expositions of the old holy doctors and saints. And who be more properly such hogs, than these hereticks of our days, of such a filthy kind as never came before, which in such wise defile all holy vowed chastity, that the very pure scripture of God they tread upon with their foul dirty feet, to draw it from all honest chastity, into an unclean shameful liberty of friars to wed nuns." 12

Intelligent men to-day do not speak thus of those who differ from them in religion, though in our hearts we still

12 *The manner and order of our elect on*—More's English Works, p. 586 Cf. as to More ante, Chapter 1



speak as violently of malignant anarchists who would destroy order, government and property. Vague in our creeds we hold fast to law and property. But the old theological habit of exhausting the vials of vituperation upon heretics was still strong in the sixteenth century, when they swarmed as never before, and when their arguments as here in England looked to social and economic, as well as religious, change.

## Chapter 5

### Church Revolution by Royal Prerogative and Acts of Parliament

#### I

THE COURSE of the self assertion of the English realm and of its eventual separation from the papacy may be traced through a series of royal and statutory decrees. It opens, if one will, with the Conqueror's emphatic refusal to do fealty to Gregory VII since "neither have I promised it, nor do I find that my predecessors did it to your predecessors." The chronicler Eadmer amplifies William's rejection of Gregory's enormous claims: "He would not then allow any one settled in all his dominion to acknowledge as apostolic the pontiff of the City of Rome, save at his own bidding, or by any means to receive any letter from him if it had not first been shown to himself." His masterful assertion of his will over his own bishops is shown in the same writing.<sup>1</sup>

The high hand of the Conqueror could not be maintained. Henry I compromised the matter of investitures with the saintly but unyielding Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury; and a century later the royal self respect sank to its nadir when John, overwhelmed by his offenses, in expiation surrendered his realm to the legate of Pope

<sup>1</sup> These extracts are from Gee and Hardy, *Documents illustrative of English Church History* (Macmillan, 1914), pp. 57, 59.

Innocent III and received it back as a feudal fee, doing homage and promising an annual payment of one thousand marks.<sup>2</sup> Again the tide turned and markedly under Edward I The Mortmain Act of 1279 forbade the transfer of lands to the dead hand of the Church and some years later the Barons of the realm in parliament denied the suzerainty of Rome over Scotland, which Edward contemplated reducing to his obedience. A still later statute of the same reign prohibited English monasteries from sending gold to their superiors abroad.<sup>3</sup>

The important statutes of Provisors and Praemunire take form in the reigns of Edward III and Richard II. Those against Provisors raised an effective wall against the papal bestowal of English benefices in anticipation of their vacancy. The Praemunire legislation highly penalized the transferring to foreign courts of suits cognizable in the courts of the realm. The matter of these statutes might be, and subsequently was, much extended to meet other cases, especially during the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth, and barred the exercise of papal authority in England.<sup>4</sup>

The feudal and dynastic Wars of the Roses ended in 1485 with the accession of Henry VII. For a year or more after Bosworth Field, Henry showed by word and conduct that he deemed his victory had straightened all obliquities in his title to the throne. Having thus carefully made his own right clear, he married the undoubted heiress of the opposing claims. All that was left of York and Lancaster was thus united. Then the shrewd and tireless King set himself to foster the surest interests of England. He abandoned the hapless policy of continental conquest, which had drained the country's blood and wealth, and had impeded the development of an insular nation. Instead, by intrigues and filibustering threatenings, and treaties pa-

<sup>2</sup> Documents in Gee and Hardy, *o. c.* p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> Gee and Hardy, *o. c.* pp. 81, 91, 93.

<sup>4</sup> See post p. 104 sqq. Those of the reigns of Edward III and Richard II are given in Gee and Hardy *o. c.* pp. 103, 104, 112, 125.

tently worked out, he advanced the foreign commerce of his people, and, aided by parliament, virtually created the cloth industry at home, so that England became an exporter of cloth as well as of her staple wools. His policy, moreover, favored the general distribution of wealth among all who were engaged in industry or trade, and did not permit its accumulation in the hands of the London merchants. Assisted by the institution of the court of the Star Chamber, he conciliated or subjected to himself the decimated aristocracy, and made royal servitors of once feudal lords. But he created few new peerages, and appointed capable Commoners and Churchmen to the high offices of state. In his hands or those of his experienced councillors, the rents from the enormous confiscated crown lands of York and Lancaster increased, while the customs which had been granted him for life added to his constant sources of revenue. He so manipulated those imposts paid by foreigners as to bring a greater revenue to himself and at the same time further his measures to enlarge the trade of England. This was an instance of his general policy, which was to enhance his royal power and revenue, while keeping these aims identified with the prosperity of his realm. His acts disclose no personal despotic purpose running counter to his people's interests. Abstinence from costly foreign wars was certainly an advantage to England, even though it enabled the King to amass treasure, and rule without recourse to parliament for grants.

The benefits accruing from this autocratic reign, and the transmission of an unquestionable hereditary title, caused the accession of the eighth Henry to be greeted with universal acclaim. The dreadful lessons of a disputed succession and civil war had been branded into the English consciousness. Henceforth, for wellnigh a century, England was daily to rise up and lie down to rest in the security of the Tudor title to the throne and the authority of the occupant. Whatever might be the preferences of the people in religion or aught else, this ingrained conviction

assured the succession of the child Edward VI, and upon his death, made vain the opposition to Mary, and when she died fastened men's hopes upon Elizabeth.

The preceding paragraphs may suggest some of the reasons why the power of Henry VIII proved resistless in his mortal conflict with the papacy. Sheer suddenness is rare in history. Although various tendencies, long gathering, were brought to a head and the explosion fired by royal passion, one will remember the organic preparation for the catastrophe. The old feeling and forms of expression are still carried on in royal or parliamentary utterances. A statute of *Præmunire* passed in 1393 in the sixteenth year of Richard II, a foolish futile King, apostrophizes "the crown of England, which has been so free at all times, that it has been in no earthly subjection, but immediately subject to God in all things touching the royalty of the same crown, and to none other," and denounces the illegal practices through which it would "be submitted to the pope, and the laws and statutes of the realm defeated and avoided at his will, to the perpetual destruction of the sovereignty of our lord the King, his crown, and his royalty, and of all his realm, which God defend." So speaks the older statute and Henry VIII when not yet twenty-five years old, about the year 1514, refusing to allow an appeal to the pope declared "By the permission and ordinance of God, we are King of England, and the Kings of England in times past had never any superior, but God alone. Therefore, know ye well that we will maintain the right of our crown and of our temporal jurisdiction in as ample a manner as any of our progenitors have done before our time."

These words were uttered before any thought had come of the final rupture, and even before Henry had aired his theological and royal vanity in his book against Luther, for which he received from the pope the title of Defender of the Faith. And when the final rupture was approaching, in 1533, what one might dub a super-statute of *Præmunire* (enacted doubtless at the King's behest) prohib-

ited all appeals to Rome, and proclaimed the sufficiency of the King's courts temporal and spiritual for the adjudication of all controversies. Its recital emphasized and expanded the old principles of sovereign independence declared in 'divers sundry old authentic histories and chronicles' that this realm of England is an empire governed by one supreme head and King having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same '—unto whom the body politic composed of all sorts and degrees of people divided into spirituality and temporality, owe, next to God, a natural and humble obedience<sup>5</sup>

# II

The antagonism between the King of England and the pope of Rome which became a mortal conflict, had nothing to do with the Christian faith or with doctrines necessary to salvation. It was personal and political. Henry, impelled by the desire for a male heir to his throne and driven by a specific passion for the person of Anne Boleyn, asked of Pope Clement VII an annulment of his marriage with Catharine of Aragon. The pope would not comply, because the counter pressure of Emperor Charles V was heavier than any influence Henry could bring to bear. There had been qualms as to the legitimacy of Henry's marriage with the probably virgin widow of his elder brother, and some transient doubt cast on the papal competency to grant the requisite dispensation. There is no evidence, however, that this question had worried Henry before the desire came for another and legitimate marriage, not an illicit connection with a mistress. As the prospects dwindled for favorable action from the pope, the facilitated Cranmer suggested to the King that he obtain responses on the validity of his marriage with Catharine from the leading Universities. Persuasion or pressure, brought the desired responses from Oxford and Cambridge,

<sup>5</sup> Gee and Hardy o. c. p. 187 sqq. This statute will be given more fully post p. 104 sqq.

from Paris Orleans Angers Bourges and Toulouse Bologna and Padua—no mean array of authority The universities within the Emperor's dominions were not asked! The intricate affair proceeded Henry was cited to appear in Rome while the pope under pressure from the Emperor threatened him with excommunication unless he put Anne away and took back Catharine In response the Convocation of the English clergy declared that the King's marriage to Catharine was unlawful, and in April 1533 the court of the new archbishop Cranmer, pronounced it null and void—the King already had been married secretly to Anne whereupon in Rome the marriage to Catharine was confirmed and Henry excommunicated

Such is the bare outline of the divorce itself We turn to the measures by which the King in furtherance of his personal and royal ends and in defiant opposition to the pope made himself the supreme head of the Church of England They are to be followed in the acts of parliament and the determinations of the English Church in Convocation Although the prime movers were the King and his secretary, Thomas Cromwell parliament was not unwilling to enact laws, prohibiting the despatch of revenue to Rome abrogating the papal authority in England and subjecting the clergy to the power of the King in parliament On the other hand there was wide sympathy with Catharine and dislike for Anne The King's divorce and remarriage were far more unpopular than the measures through which he became Head of the Church

The parliament which met in November 1529, and was not dissolved for seven years was the instrument which effected the breach with the papacy established the King's supremacy over the English Church and decreed the suppression of the monasteries Wolsey had fallen and the chancellorship was held by Sir Thomas More the first of that distinguished line of laymen who ever since have conducted that office It was in the air that parliament would cut the skirts of the unpopular clerical order, while the substitution of the King as head of the Church in place of

the pope, was likely to depend upon the pope's rejection of the King's demand for a divorce

Wolsey had woefully confessed himself guilty of a *praemunire* in having accepted the office of papal legate Under the King's encouragement, parliament now fell upon clerical abuses, and after warm discussion, passed laws regulating the probate and mortuary fees of the ecclesiastic court, clerical non-residence and pluralities, and the farming of Church lands It was becoming clear that the pope would not comply with Henry's will So in December 1530 a *praemunire* was brought in the King's bench against the entire clerical body for having recognized Wolsey's legatine authority! The Convocations of the terror stricken clergy were informed that their guilt might be compounded by the payment of a large sum of money for the King's necessities, provided they would also recognize him as "the sole protector and supreme head of the Church and Clergy in England." After grievous debate, this condition also was accepted, with slight change of form and the addition of the somewhat unsatisfactory words "as far as the law of Christ allows"

The next marked step in the subjection of the clergy to the royal will was the doctrinally careful and orthodox Petition of the Commons, laid before the King in March, 1532 This spoke of seditious books and "fantastical" opinions contrary to the true Catholic faith, and besought remedies against various clerical abuses and exactions, the delays and excessive fees of the ecclesiastical courts, their imprisonment of innocent people, the improper conferment of benefices and excessive number of holy days, but above all (the real point and gravamen of the matter) against the power of the bishops and other clergy in Convocation to make laws, constitutions, and ordinances without the consent of King and parliament<sup>6</sup>

This was submitted to Convocation, which soon answered with an explicit defense of their acts and conduct

<sup>6</sup> Given in Gee and Hardy, *o. c.* pp. 145 sqq



and their law making authority "grounded upon the Scripture of God and the determination of Holy Church." They protested their inability to "submit the execution of our charges and duty, certainly prescribed by God, to your highness' assent," ready as they were to listen to his opinion. The King handed this reply to a deputation from the Commons, saying "We think their answer will smally please you, for it seemeth to us very slender." The Commons should consider it, while he, the King, would be impartial.

Convocation now became alarmed, and attempted a compromise which proved unacceptable. The King sent for the Speaker and twelve members of the Commons, and said to them "Well beloved subjects, we thought that the clergy of our realm had been our subjects wholly; but now we have well perceived that they be but half our subjects—yea, and scarce our subjects. For all the prelates at their consecration make an oath to the pope clean contrary to the oath they make to us, so that they seem his subjects and not ours." He gave them a copy of the two oaths, the incompatibility of which now struck him so forcibly, and suggested further measures of constraint. Realizing the hopeless situation, Convocation made submission in a formal document<sup>7</sup> (May 15, 1532), in which they recognized the King's goodness and pious zeal, his learning far exceeding that of other kings, they promised to make no new canons, constitutions or ordinances, without the King's assent, and to submit existing canons for abrogation or approval to a committee to be composed of sixteen members of the upper and lower house of Parliament and sixteen members of the clergy, all appointed by the King.

Having brought the English clergy to subjection, the King, with Parliament, proceeded against the pope. Already an act had been passed conditionally restraining

<sup>7</sup> Called "The Submission of the Clergy," Gee and Hardy *o. c.* p. 176

the payment of annates to the pope, and providing for the consecration of bishops in case of hindrance from Rome.<sup>8</sup> There followed now, after some debate as to its untoward effect upon England's commercial relations with Flanders, the passage of the great statute in Restraint of Appeals to Rome.<sup>9</sup> This declared England to be an Empire "governed by one supreme head and king . . . unto whom a body politic compact of all sorts and degrees of people divided in terms and by names of spirituality and temporality, be bounden and ought to bear, next to God, a natural and humble obedience." The "English Church" within this realm possesses the wisdom to resolve all questions "without the intermeddling of any exterior person or persons," and the "laws temporal, for trial of property of lands and goods, and for the conservation of the people of this realm in unity and peace," are sufficiently administered by temporal judges. The act refers to statutes of previous reigns passed to preserve the realm's prerogatives, notwithstanding which "sundry inconveniences and dangers, not provided for plainly by the said former acts have arisen by reason of appeals sued out of this realm to the see of Rome, in causes testamentary, causes of matrimony and divorces, right of tithes" and so forth, and enacts that all such causes pertaining "to the spiritual jurisdiction of this realm," shall be determined exclusively in the spiritual and temporal courts of the Kingdom, and that their sentences alone shall take effect, while appeals shall be determined within the realm. The clergy shall continue to administer the sacraments notwithstanding any interdicts from Rome, and any person endeavoring to procure such interdict, or make any appeal to Rome, shall be guilty under the statutes of Praemunire and Provisors.

This act made futile as well as fatal any appeal to Rome from the prospective annulment, in an English ecclesias-

<sup>8</sup> Gee and Hardy o.c. pp. 178 sqq.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* pp. 187 sqq. Feby., 1533.

tical court, of the King's marriage to Catharine. At the close of 1533, (when the King had been excommunicated) his Council went on preparing for complete severance with the pope, who henceforth should be called by no other title than "Bishop of Rome." In the following year three acts of Parliament carried out the program. The first provided for the complete submission of the clergy in pursuance of their declaration (already noted), and for the appointment of the committee therein contemplated, and forbade all appeals to Rome.<sup>10</sup> The second prohibited unconditionally the payment of annates and the presentation of persons to the pope for the office of bishop or archbishop. It provided for their election by dean and chapter on nomination by the King, and for their consecration and oath of fealty to the Crown.<sup>11</sup> Thirdly, a long and most elaborate act forbade the payment of Peter's pence, and much more besides. It recited the impoverishment of the realm through the intolerable exactions of the Bishop of Rome, and his usurpation of power to dispense with human laws, all "in great derogation of your imperial crown and authority royal, contrary to right and conscience." The King's realm is subject only to laws made within it, and the same may be dispensed by the "High Court of Parliament" and persons authorized by them. And, "inasmuch as your majesty is supreme head of the Church of England, as the prelates and clergy of your realm have recognized," the act prohibited the payment of Peter's pence or any other impositions, to the see of Rome, and declared that neither the King or his subjects should henceforth sue for any dispensation or license from the Bishop of Rome, but the same should be had from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and, in all exceptional or novel cases, under the approval of the King and his council. The solemn declaration was inserted that it was not the intention of the act "to decline or vary from the congregation of

<sup>10</sup> Gre and Hardy, *o. c.* pp. 195 sqq.

<sup>11</sup> Gre and Hardy *o. c.* pp. 201 sqq.

Christ's Church in any things concerning the very articles of the Catholic faith in Christendom, or in any other things declared, by Holy Scripture and the word of God necessary for your and their salvations, [i.e. the salvation of the King and his subjects] but only to make an ordinance by policies necessary and convenient to repress vice, and for the good conservation of this realm in peace, unity, and tranquillity " "

The last proviso indicates the politico-ecclesiastical, but undoctinal, nature of the revolution which had been brought about. In November of the same year (1534) the first "Act of Succession" decreed the absolute nullity of Henry's marriage to Catharine, and the unquestionable validity of his marriage to Anne and established the succession to the crown in the heirs male of the latter marriage and in default of the same, in the Lady Elizabeth, and the heirs of her body. It was declared to be high treason to impugn this marriage and succession, by act or speech or writing, and an oath to maintain it was prescribed for all the King's subjects, which it was to be high treason to refuse. Renunciations of papal authority were then obtained from the Convocations of Canterbury and York, from the two universities, and from the monasteries generally, all declaring that the Bishop of Rome had no more jurisdiction in England than any other foreign bishop.

### III

The revolution which had been brought about through the royal will and its effective embodiment in acts of parliament, consisted in the repudiation of the pope and his authority and in the recognition of the King as the supreme head of what had now become the Church of England. This revolution, which was for a time to be the main feature if not the chief propelling force in the larger movement called the English Reformation did not affect directly the Christian faith and doctrine and the saving of souls. It would be an error to suppose that the King had become the Supreme Head of the Church of England in

preached certain sermons, elucidating the position of the Bishop of Rome, showing

"that many of his laws were contrary to God's laws, and some of them which were good and laudable, yet they were not of such holiness as would make them, that is, to be taken as God's or to have remission of sins by observing of them. And here I said that so many of his laws as were good and laudable, men ought not to condemn and despise them, and wilfully to break them, for those that be good your Grace has received as laws of your realm, until such time as others should be made. And, therefore, as laws of your realm, they must be observed and not contemned. And here I spake as well of the ceremonies of the Church, as of the foresaid laws, and that they ought neither to be rejected or despised, nor yet to be observed, with this opinion, that they of themselves make men holy, or that they remit sin. For seeing that our sins be remitted by the death of our Saviour Christ Jesus, I said it was too much injury to Christ to impute the remission of our sins to any laws or ceremonies of man's making. But as the common

laws of your Grace's realm be not made to remit sin, nor no man doth observe them for that intent, but for a common commodity, and for a good order and quietness to be observed among your subjects, even so were the laws and ceremonies first instituted in the Church for a good order and remembrance of many good things, but not for the remission of our sins. And though it be good to observe them well for that intent they were first ordained, yet it is not good, but a contumely unto Christ to observe them with this opinion, that they remit sin, or that the very bare observation of them in itself is an holiness before God, although they be remembrances of many holy things, or a disposition unto goodness. And even so do the laws of your Grace's realm dispose men unto justice, to peace, and other true and perfect holiness, wherefore I did conclude for a general rule, that the people ought to observe them as they do the laws of your Grace's realm, and with no more opinion of holi-

ness or remission of sin, than the other common laws of your Grace's realm " 12

If such was the view touching the laws and ceremonies of the hitherto established Roman Catholic Church, the royal Church of England could take no other view of its own laws and ceremonies, especially since in the last resort they emanated from the same law giving power, to wit, the King in parliament, from which sprang the common laws of the realm. Obviously that law making power, however supreme and royal, was human, and none of its enactments could make or mar, or affect directly, the salvation of a single soul. It could not remit sins or condemn a soul to hell. Temporal penalties must be relied upon to compel the payment of tithes, for example, for which the parish priests, of the former Roman Catholic Church, had been wont to "curse," with all the supposed consequences 13

Nevertheless, save for authority over the destinies of souls beyond the grave—or beyond the *stake*—with respect to this world of speech and writing and visible conduct, the Church of England under the authority of parliament and the headship of the King, continued to exercise the functions of the Church of Rome. Moreover, from the novelty or anomaly of its position as in fact a newly established national and independent, if not separate, church, it would be obliged to declare the principles of its adoption of the contents of Christian truth, and even to constitute *de novo* some body of Anglican doctrine. This state-church (there might be difficulty in distinguishing its two constituents) necessarily partook of the character of its political source and sanction, if it emanated from the King in parliament, and had the King for its head, did it not in some sense include its head and that which it emanated from? The King was soon to preside in Con-

12 *Ellis's Letters &c.* Third series, Vol. III pp. 23 sqq.

13 With reluctance, we may suppose, on the part of the good priests, at least. As Chaucer says "Pull loth he was to cursen for his tithes."

vocation, through his vicar Thomas Crumwell, and masterfully direct its action. Thus English Church, inclusive of its parliamentary source and kingly headship, was not merely lawful and established, it was enunciatory and law-giving. It was law, and law means obedience, either voluntary, or when withheld, enforced. The principle of law, with its complement of obedience, meant necessarily conformity, conformity to norm, and so meant uniformity. That also accorded with the spirit of the laws common to all the realm, through which England had become a nation.

Further, out of the necessities of the nature of this Church proceeded the character and process of its development and self-formulation. Its origin was in law and institution, it emanated from the command and power of the King in parliament. It did not arise from any moving conception of abuses and the need of definite reform far less, did it spring from an idea, such as that of justification by faith. Therefore its evolution and further progress could not be as a leap from thought to another thought new born, as light signals flash from peak to peak. That had been the way of Luther's development. The official English remaking or reformation of the Church must proceed through official command and adaptation or modification or abolishment of institutions, and through enunciated formulæ, of doctrine to be sure, but more generally of *observance*. It would thus attain to a body of outer conformity, which might have sincere and rational grounds for such men as were sincere and rational, and yet would proceed or function through state oath and formal utterance and the fulfilment of a ceremonial painfully defined.

So it was also a very practical affair,—the English Church and the course of its formation. It moved from the decision of one point of practice or doctrine to another, often impelled not merely by the exigencies of the domestic situation, but by foreign diplomatic opportunities or dangers. Likewise its supporters and opponents within the Kingdom would be moved by points of practice and by

ceremonial preference a question of lay or ecclesiastical jurisdiction might attract a man or repel him through his attachment to old practices and so his taste in vestments or no-vestments, and whether he preferred an altar or a communion table, and where it should be placed. Each point of practice, every element of ceremonial, or its abolition represented some conviction or idea, and therefore was a symbol. But more really and directly the moving or repelling influence was habit and association with the actual fact itself, rather than a consideration of the spiritual validity of what it stood for, and whether taken as a symbol or a fact, it was English. If its representation of spiritual truth was rather veiled than naked, it should at all events be seemly, entirely decent and respectable. This might represent much to Englishmen, who have always done a good deal of thinking in terms of the deceptions of life.

## IV

We turn for further illustration to the courses of events. In November 1534 a short act was passed making the King unqualifiedly "the only supreme head in earth of the Church of England."<sup>14</sup> It provided that he should "have and enjoy, annexed and united to the imperial crown of this realm . . . all honours, dignities, pre-eminences, jurisdictions, privileges, authorities, immunities, profits and commodities to the said dignity of supreme head of the same Church belonging and appertaining." It granted to the King his heirs and successors full power and authority from time to time to repress, reform, restrain and amend all errors, heresies and abuses which might lawfully be reformed and restrained by "any manner spiritual authority or jurisdiction . . . to the pleasure of Almighty God, the increase of virtue in Christ's religion, and for the conservation of the peace, unity, and tranquillity of this realm any usage, custom, foreign law, etc., to the contrary notwithstanding." There was passed at the same time a con-

<sup>14</sup> It omitted the words "so far as the law of Christ allows."



firmatory act of succession, giving the form of oath, and declaring that it should be sworn to by all the subjects of the King, also an act specifically making it treason to utter speech or writing derogatory to the king or queen, their *title and dignities and orthodoxy* <sup>15</sup>

The executions of More and Fisher followed, and of certain heroic Carthusians, for refusing to take the oath. They would have sworn to the succession itself decreed by the act, but the oath involved repudiation of papal authority and approval of Henry's divorce, to which their consciences would not permit them to assent. On the other hand, King and Church vindicated *their orthodoxy*, and the decency and order of the realm, by burning a goodly number of Anabaptists. Henry was still as particular touching his doctrinal orthodoxy as he had been in those previous years when his demands upon the pope were progressing from insistency, through minatory pressure, to mortal conflict in the end. He had then sanctioned the *burning of heretics more respectable than these rowdy Anabaptists*.

The King, as head of the Church made Thomas Cromwell his vicar general, and a commission was issued to him to hold a general visitation of churches monasteries and collegiate bodies. There followed through a lengthy process of investigation, report, and parliamentary action the *famous suppression of the monasteries, and the transfer of their lands and plate to the royal exchequer*. About half of these huge domains were granted by the King to a number of nobles and influential commoners, who had aided in these measures, and whose support was thereby won permanently for the throne. These holdings became a vested interest calculated to rivet the royal Church upon the realm. There *might be and were remonstrances and murmurs and revolts* <sup>16</sup> against these changes in the Church,

<sup>15</sup> Gee and Hardy o c p 243 247

<sup>16</sup> For instance the famous "Pilgrimage of Grace" which embroiled the northern counties in the years 1537 and 1538. It is elaborately treated in *The Pilgrimage of Grace* M. H. & Ruth Dodds, 2 Vols. (Cambridge, 1915)

but they broke down before the power of the King and the strength of vested interests. Even the Papal restoration under Mary did not dare disturb the fact, but confirmed the grants of abbey and such like lands in the hands of the possessors.<sup>17</sup> The suppression of the monasteries, cruel as it was and unseemly in its details, liberated England from a spiritual incubus. Good, bad, or indifferent as these foundations were, the homes of lethargy and immorality, or well conducted establishments, which incidentally paid the expenses of many a scholar at the universities, they were no longer suited to the life, the progress, and the secularization of England, and the laicizing of her government and judiciary.

Another measure of less material, but great spiritual, effect, was the establishment of Biblical studies at the universities and the removal of Duns Scotus and his like, together with the Canon Law from the curriculum.<sup>18</sup> For the Canon law was the very *rationale* of the papacy.

To return to the formulation of doctrine by the Church. The early Christian Church lived and breathed amid pagan acceptances and a conglomerate of pagan-Christian notions. Its formulation of dogma proceeded largely through disclaimer and counter-statement. Now the Church of England, based upon this ancient dogmatic formulation and surrounded by an abundance of contemporary Christian truth and error—Catholic, Lutheran, Zwinglian, not to mention indigenous Lollardy—was to proceed through selection and adoption, mainly. The influence of the tyrant theologian on the throne was strong, overmastering usually. He had still plenty of thoughts upon theology. Beneath his altered views the conceit of his *Asterio septem sacramentorum* against Luther still puffed him up. He was no unfit representative of his people, his thoughts, his opinions: his self assertion might be theirs, for he could listen

<sup>17</sup> See the second act of Repeal of Philip and Mary 1554. Gee and Hardy *o. c.* pp. 385-394.

<sup>18</sup> See the sprightly letter of Layton to Cromwell 1535. Ellis *Letters* 2nd Series, Vol. II, p. 60.

closely for his people's voices, and as for their attitude toward religion and its royal exponent, the remark of the Venetian ambassador is to the point "With the English, the example and authority of the Sovereign is everything, and religion is only so far valued as it inculcates the duty due from the subject to the prince" Although this has more absurdity than truth, one can understand how an ambassador, moving much in court circles, might have thought it The people were to have, and eventually express and realize plenty of religious opinions having little to do with upholding the King's authority And, of course, even as his divorce and all the ecclesiastical breaches which it involved were abhorrent to many and bitterly spoken against, many likewise detested the religious innovations promulgated under his authority If but little appeared changed beyond the government and secular allegiance of the Church, men knew it was not so It was just as clear to many a good Roman Catholic as it became to protesting sectaries and future Puritans, that Church government and constitution could not be severed from faith and doctrine, but all were part of the inseverable discipline and truth which saved, or of the idolatry and false doctrine which so surely damned

Yet the Ten Articles of 1536, the first completed Formulary of the Church of England, asserted that the two were distinct and severable, and treated them separately under respective heads of matters "expressly commanded by God and necessary to our salvation," and such other things as belong to a decent and established Church usage This true English attempt to select and formulate the seemingly and convenient rightly bore the printed title <sup>19</sup> "Articles devised by the Kinges Highnes Majestic, to stablyshe Christen Quietnes and Unitie Amonge us, and avoyde contentious opinions, which Articles be also approved by

<sup>19</sup> I am following the text given in Appendix I to Hardwick's *History of the Articles* (1851)

the consent and determination of the hole clergie of this realme " 20

The King was not present at the Convocation in St. Paul's Church which approved them, but his place was taken by Crumwell as his vice-gerent, and the latter's proctor Crumwell set forth in vigorous language the King's solicitude over the situation, which called for concord instead of brawling and the establishment of every article upon the Word of God. The house of bishops was divided in its tendencies. The lower house sent up a protestation, under sixty-seven heads, against errors and abuses, most of which were plainly Lutheran or Lollard, yet with a humble disclaimer of any intention of displeasing "the King's Highnes . . . supreme Head of the Church of England . . . to whom accordingly we submit ourselves." They vehemently abjured the usurped authority of the Bishop of Rome.<sup>21</sup> The Articles were passed,—a selection and compromise. They were not destined to much popularity, and were especially disapproved by the northern clergy in their convocation, who still opposed the headship of the king.<sup>22</sup>

A preface from the King bespoke the need of chantable concord and unity, and pointed out that the necessary articles of faith would first be stated, and then the honest ceremonies and good politic orders to be used in the churches although not necessary to salvation.<sup>23</sup> The first Article ordains "that all bishops and preachers shall instruct and teach our people, *by us committed to their*

<sup>20</sup> A year or more before the King composed or supervised the composition of a book called *King Henry's Primer* which assembled the Christian teachings proper for his people. See Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* Vol. I Pt. I Chapter XXXI.

<sup>21</sup> Printed in Strype *Ecc Mem* I II Appendix of Originals, No LXXIII.

<sup>22</sup> The opinion is given in Strype ib No LXXIV.

<sup>23</sup> The Ten Articles are printed in Hardwick *On the Articles* also in Lloyd's *Formularies of Faith* (Oxford, 1825) which also contains the *Institution of a Christian Man* and *A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition* etc.

*spiritual charge,*" to believe and defend as true "all those things which be comprehended in the whole body and canon of the Bible and also in the three creeds or symbols . . . the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian. All these things must be held and taken for 'the most holy, most sure, and most certain, and infallible words of God,' not to be altered, by any authority. They are necessary to be believed for man's salvation, and whosoever, after instruction, will not believe, will be damned. The decision of the ancient councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon, condemning contrary opinions, are to be accepted.

The second article sustains the Catholic doctrine of baptism and denounces Anabaptists and Pelagians. The third, upon penance, follows generally the Catholic view, making "the sacrament of perfect penance" to consist of "contrition, confession, and amendment of the former life, and a new obedient reconciliation unto the laws and will of God" by works of charity. Confession to a priest is declared necessary, the authoritative efficacy of his absolution is recognized, and the necessity of good works. No reference is made to indulgences and the supererogatory merits of the saints, which are spoken of in the tenth article. The fourth article asserts the real and corporeal presence of the selfsame body and blood of Christ under the form and figure of bread and wine. *Nothing is said of the giving or withholding of the cup from the laity.*

So far there was scarcely perceptible deviation from Catholic doctrine, which however, was emphatically, though silently, departed from by the omission of the remaining four sacraments recognized by the Roman Catholic Church. The next (fifth) article is upon *Justification*, which is remission of our sins and acceptance into the grace of God. Sinners attain it "by contrition and faith joined with charity . . . not as though our contrition or faith, or any works proceeding thereof, can worthily merit or deserve the said justification" but only the grace of the Father and the merits of the Son. Nevertheless besides un-

ward contrition, faith, and charity, God requireth of us "that after we be justified we must also have good works of charity and obedience towards God . . . for although acceptation to everlasting life be conjoined with justification, yet our good works be necessarily required to the attaining of everlasting life."

This lumping argument may have been one of the reasons why Melancthon spoke of the Articles as *confusissimum compositum*, most confusedly put together. The remaining five articles, "concerning the laudable ceremonies used in the Church," also might have drawn his sarcasm. Yet even Luther's convictions only gradually reached their ultimate conclusions through the experiences of life and the goads of controversy, and one should not expect logical consistency in this the first selective and adoptive draft of Anglicanism, which was to be throughout a compromise and *via media*, with very little originality, and a consistency of expression, temperament, and fitness, rather than of logic.

The first of these latter articles touching meet, though unsaving, ceremonies, treats of images, which are an ancient and useful means of kindling men's minds, and should remain in Churches, but must not be worshipped. The next approves the honoring of saints, but not with that confidence in them which is due to God alone. It is laudable to supplicate the saints in heaven for their interceding prayers, yet not thinking of any of them as quicker to hear than Christ, or that any one of the saints "doth serve for one thing more than another, or is patron of the same." The ninth article approves the rites and ceremonies of the Church, as putting "us in remembrance of those spiritual things that they do signify . . . But none of these ceremonies have power to remit sin, but only to stir and lift our minds unto God, by whom only our sins are forgiven." The last article, of Purgatory, affirms "that it is a very good and charitable deed to pray for souls departed" and "it standeth with the very due order of charity [for] a Christian man to pray for souls de-

parted and commit them to God's mercy, and also to cause others to pray for them in masses and exequies, and to give alms to other to pray for them, whereby they may be relieved and holpen of some part of their pain," but as their condition is not certified to us by Scripture, we remit the matter to God's mercy, "to whom is known their estate and condition Wherefore it is much necessary that such abuses be put away, which under the name of purgatory have been advanced as to make men believe that through the Bishop of Rome's pardons souls might clearly be delivered out of purgatory" or that masses said at Scala Coeli could "send them straight to heaven."

There was nothing of greater import in the Articles than the fact that they were issued by the King, and appeared as the production of a convocation presided over by his vice gerent. As is usual with compromises, they roused little enthusiasm and much dissatisfaction. In the north in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire for example a large protest very like a rebellion directed itself against all heresy and innovation, and against the destruction of the monasteries. This was "The Pilgrimage of Grace." The King suppressed it through his vigor, cruelty and astuteness, aided by the reluctance of the leaders of the Pilgrimage to oppose the King in arms. Apart from the Pilgrimage, however, it was clear that a goodly part of both laity and clergy throughout the country had no wish to see the hitherto accepted doctrines and practices of the Church disturbed even to the degree provided in the Articles. On the other hand such reform or innovation as they contained—and more besides!—was acceptable in London and the commercial cities of the south. Many within Convocation and thousands without desired still more of the "new learning." Their minds were surging with indigenous protestantism and thoughts from Germany.

The result was that within a year, Convocation again was summoned to agree upon a further statement, in view of wide dissensions by no means yet allayed. It issued another Formulary, called *The Institution of a Christian*

*Man* This expounded the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the *Ave Maria*, but the most important addition, which must be taken as a concession to the conservative or reactionary revolt, was the restoration of the omitted four sacraments to a place among the authorized doctrines of the English Church. It contained a preface from the Convocation to the King. In fact it seemed more distinctly than the Ten Articles to issue from Convocation, and was also dubbed the "Bishops' Book." Yet it submitted itself wholly to the King for his approbation. He lacking, as he said, the time to study it carefully, nevertheless had tasted it and found nothing that was not laudable. So he directed that it should be read and taught in parish churches for the space of three years.

No Pilgrimage of Grace or other protest had succeeded in unseating Thomas Cromwell, who was hated by Catholics as the chief promoter of the royal heresies—if only they dared call them so. It was Cromwell who, as the King's vice-gerent, issued the first royal injunctions to the clergy<sup>24</sup> enjoining them to publish and inculcate the Articles and the acts of Parliament abolishing the Bishop of Rome's pretended jurisdiction. The clergy were admonished to forbear from superstitious ceremonies, to exhort their parishioners to keep God's commandments and fulfill works of charity, rather than go on pilgrimages, since it will more profit their soul's health to 'bestow that on the poor and needy, which they would have bestowed on . . . images and relics.' Let the clergy instruct their parishioners and promote the education of the young, avoid taverns, drinking riot, and cardplaying, devoting themselves instead to the study of Scripture.

After the appearance of the *Institution*, another vigorous set of Injunctions was issued, in 1538<sup>25</sup>. Titularly they were full fledged.

<sup>24</sup> 1536. Gee and Hardy o. c. pp. 269 sqq.

<sup>25</sup> Gee and Hardy o. c. pp. 275 sqq.



"In the name of God, Amen. By the authority and commission of the most excellent Prince Henry, by the Grace of God King, etc., in earth supreme head under Christ of the Church of England, I, Thomas, lord Cromwell, lord privy seal, vice gerent to the King's said highness for all his jurisdictions ecclesiastical within this realm give and exhibit unto you [blank] these injunctions following to be kept, observed, and fulfilled upon the pains hereafter declared."

The previous injunctions are confirmed, with added threats. Then comes the straight command to place one copy "of the whole Bible of the largest volume, in English" *in every parish church for the parishioners to read*. Moreover every person is to be exhorted to read the Scriptures privily or openly, avoiding contention and referring his difficulties "to men of higher judgment in Scripture." The Lord's Prayer and the Creed are to be taught in English, sentence by sentence, and likewise the Ten Commandments. *The very gospel of Christ shall be purely and sincerely* declared, in four quarterly sermons, and all are to be exhorted "to the works of charity, mercy, and faith, specially prescribed and commanded in Scripture, and not to repose their trust in any other works devised by men's phantasies besides Scripture, as in wandering to pilgrimages, offering of money, candles or tapers to images or relics, or kissing or licking the same, saying over a number of beads, not understood or minded on,"—all of which tend to idolatry and superstition, the offense most abhorrent to God. The "Feigned images" which are "abused with pilgrimages or offerings" are to be taken down, nor shall candles or tapers be set before any image or picture. You shall admonish your parishioners that images serve but as 'books of unlearned men,' to recall the lives of those they represent, "whuch images, if they abuse for any other intent they commit idolatry." The clergy are forbidden to change the days of fasting but the commemoration of Thomas à Becket "shall be clean

omitted." For indeed Becket was a stench in Henry's nostrils, though the Injunctions do not say so!

If these second Injunctions seemed to point to a reformation of worship, they left small scope for personal deviation or discretion. That all things in the Church should be done under authority and as allowed, and no fantastic aberration permitted, was made still more emphatic in the King's proclamation, published late in the same year. It prohibited the importation, sale, or publication of unlicensed English books, no one was to print or sell unsupervised "books of Scripture," or dispute as to the Sacrament. The marriage of priests was sternly forbidden, while a number of very Catholic ceremonies were enjoined till the King should change them—thus making clear the point that their retention or discarding depended on his will. Yet one definite result of these decrees, was that an authorized English version of the Bible was recognized and commanded to be read. This efficaciously furthered the Reformation, and proved a barrier against the assertions of the papal church. Besides the resonant beauty of the version, which in fact was largely Tyndale's, the foundation of the faith and simple structure of the early church was clearly shown, and the character of the precepts which had been metamorphosed, through sacerdotal formulation, into a sacramentary system. It was much to say "elder" instead of 'priest,' "congregation" instead of "church," and 'repent' instead of 'do penance' as the Vulgate had it.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, in spite of such significant innovations, Henry's Catholic dogmatic orthodoxy continued adamant, or at any rate, royal. With learning, patience and severity, he presided at the trial of one Lambert, a quon-

<sup>20</sup> Sir Thomas More in his *Dialogue* published in 1529 Book III Chapter VIII, objected to the myriad instances of mistranslations, as he deemed them, in Tyndale's New Testament, instancing the substitution of "seniors" "congregation" and "love" for "priests," "church" and "charity" and the change of "grace" into "favour" of "confession" into "Knowledgeing" and "penance" into "repentance."

dam priest, whose main heresy was the denial of the bodily presence of Christ in the eucharist Henry directed his condemnation. This was in November 1538, and within six months drastic measures were taken to carry out the royal intent and hew all men to a Procrustean conformity with the orthodoxy alike of King and Church and realm. In June 1539 Parliament passed the act of the Six Articles, or "six bloody whips"<sup>27</sup> It recited the King's Supremacy, and the great utility of "concord agreement, and unity in opinions, as also the manifold perils which have heretofore arisen, of the diversities of minds and opinions" in matters of religion also the summoning of both Parliament and Convocation to settle six certain Articles. It stated that the King had taken part in the debates having "most graciously vouchsafed, in his own princely person, to descend and come into his said High Court of Parliament and council, and there like a prince of most high prudence and no less learning opened and declared many things of high learning and great knowledge, touching the said Articles for a unity to be had in the same," and that upon the consent of the King's highness, and the assent of both houses as well as the clergy, it was resolved and agreed upon as follows

First, the full truth of transubstantiation

Secondly, that a communion in both kinds is unnecessary

Thirdly, that priests may not marry

Fourthly, that vows of chastity are to be observed

Fifthly, that private masses be continued

Sixthly, that auricular confession is necessary

The act decreed that dissent from the first Article should be heresy, to be punished by burning and forfeiture of goods as in cases of high treason, and that to teach and maintain on trial any matter opposed to the remaining articles, should likewise involve a felon's death with forfeiture, while forfeiture was prescribed for publishing or

<sup>27</sup> Gee and Hardy o. c. pp 303 sqq

writing anything against the said Articles, with death for the second offense. Effective means were provided for the detection of these felonious offenses and the carrying out of the set penalties.

This ineluctable act swung its scourges over the heads of recalcitrants at home, and flaunted them in the faces of the Lutheran princes of Germany. Various negotiations looking towards some sort of religious union had taken place between Henry and the German Protestants, who sought to win the King to their Augsburg Confession, a document which exerted great influence upon the English formulations of belief. In 1538 the Lutheran representatives in England insisted that the Lord's Supper should be ministered to the laity in both kinds, that private propitiatory masses should be abolished, and auricular confession also, and that the clergy be permitted to marry.<sup>28</sup> They had left England with the correction of these abuses as they called them, unassented to. And the next year the Act of the Six Articles was, as it were, hurled after them, denouncing Lutheran tenets under extreme penalties. Henry was a great politician, as well as royal theologian. He was apt to time his acts to the pulse of the international situation, constantly feeling for the varying dangers to which his heresy exposed him from the Emperor and the pope, and even the French King. He knew when to court and when to repulse the Lutherans who in fact had no confidence in him and small respect for his reforms.

At all events this Act of the Six Articles was the high watermark of the intolerance and asserted Catholic orthodoxy of the established English Church. And here may be remarked that in the conception, and in the process of attainment, of uniformity, or compulsory conformity, through the reigns of Henry and Edward and Elizabeth, three grades, or stages may be distinguished. The first was the formulation or adoption of cardinal matters in

<sup>28</sup> See the document in Strype, *Eccle. Memorials* I, II No. XCVI also ib. I, I, Chapter XLV.

the saving articles of faith. Next comes the authorization and ordering of the chief ceremonies adopted or altered, or omitted from the Roman Catholic Church. Lastly in order if not in time, the process of regulation passes to the details of vestment, the placing of the communion table, and the like. The whole process is not inspiring but seemly in the result. It was big with respect for form, for 'good form' indeed, for the matter of correct social and religious convention. Its dogmatic eclecticism, its selective, moulding, plastic quality was as clearly English as Lutheranism, body and soul, was German. And the Church of England, if palpably body, had also a soul of service and conviction, a soul of beauty indeed, as well as a slightly body. The body was incorporate in a visible setting and ceremonial a little less impressive and magnificent than that of the Roman Catholic Church. Its soul found voice in the English liturgy, which may be taken as inclusive of the noble and convincing version of the Scriptures, of the rites of baptism, matrimony, burial, the Holy Communion, inclusive of daily church prayers and collects, chants, and absolutions, through which the worshipper carries from the church a stately peace.

"A necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian man, set forth by the King's Majesty" in 1543, was the last comprehensive Formulary from the King. It was not improperly called "The King's Book", for Henry had carefully corrected it. Yet the chief shaping hand is reputed to have been Cranmer's<sup>29</sup>, and other divines took part in its composition. It opened with a striking Epistle from the King to all his faithful and loving subjects setting forth his 'travail' to purge his realm of ignorance and superstition by publishing the Scriptures. Yet there is

<sup>29</sup> "To judge from Cranmer's writings and later statements he must have disapproved of much in the "Necessary Doctrine" as well as of the Act of the Six Articles. But there was politic adaptation in Cranmer and an apparent protestant evolution in his real opinions. *A Necessary Doctrine* etc. is printed in Lloyd's *Formularies of Faith* (Oxford 1825) pp. 215-377.

found in some of our people's hearts, "an inclination to sinister understanding of Scripture," with presumption, arrogance, carnal liberty and contention To remedy this, "and for avoiding such diversity in opinion," he is constrained

"to set forth, with the advice of our clergy, such a doctrine and true declaration of the true knowledge of God and his word, with the principal articles of our religion, as whereby all men may uniformly be led and taught the true understanding of that which is necessary for every Christian man to know, for the ordering himself in this life agreeable to the will and pleasure of Almighty God Which doctrine also the Lords both spiritual and temporal, with the nether House of our Parliament, have both seen and like very well"

With telling clarity the Epistle continues

"And for Knowledge of the order of the matter in this book contained, forasmuch as we know not perfectly God, but by faith, the declaration of faith occupieth, in this treatise, the first place Whereunto is next adjoining, the Declaration of the articles of our Creed, concerning what we should believe And incontinently after them followeth the Explication of the seven Sacraments [note well all the *seven Sacraments*] wherein God ordinarily worketh, and whereby he participateth unto us his spiritual gifts and graces in this life Then followeth conveniently the Declaration of the Ten Commandments being by God ordained the highway wherein each man should walk in this life to finish fruitly his journey here, and after to rest eternally in joy with him. . ."

Then is

'expounded the seven petitions of our *Pater Noster*, wherein be contained requests and suits for all things necessary to a Christian man in this present life, with Declaration of the *Ave Maria*, as a prayer containing a

joyful rehearsal and magnifying of God in the work of the incarnation of Christ, which is the ground of our salvation, wherein the blessed Virgin our Lady, for the abundance of grace wherewith God endued her, is also with this remembrance honoured and worshipped

"And forasmuch as the heads and senses of our people have been embusied and in these days travailed with the understanding of *free will, justification good works, and praying for the souls departed* we have, by the advice of our clergy, for the purgation of erroneous doctrine, declared plainly the mere and certain truth in them so as we verily trust, that to know God, and how to live after is pleasure to the attaining of everlasting life in the end this book containeth a perfect and sufficient doctrine, grounded and established in holy Scripture "

All people are exhorted to read and print its doctrine in their hearts first those whose office is to teach others, and must to that end study the Old and New Testament. "But for the other part of the Church, ordained to be taught the reading of the Old and New Testament is not so necessary but as the Prince and the policy of the realm shall think convenient. " And "the politic law of our realm hath now restrained it from a great many esteeming it sufficient for those so restrained, to hear and truly bear away the doctrine of Scripture taught by the Preachers "

After such a preface there need be no surprise that the doctrines set forth should be substantially those of the Roman Catholic Church, save for the necessary denial of the authority of the pope and whatever flowed from that. The opening explanation of 'Faith' was sufficiently Catholic, and likewise the exposition of the Creed, until the article concerning belief in "the holy Catholic Church." Here it was pointed out that the holy church

' is also catholic that is to say, not limited to any one place or region of the world, but is in every place uni-

versally through the world, where it pleaseth God to call people to him in the profession of Christ's name and faith. And this church is relieved, nourished, and fortified by his holy and invincible word and his sacraments, which in all places have each of them their own proper force and strength, with gifts of graces also distributed by the goodness of Almighty God in all places, as to his wisdom is seen convenient."

"Whereby it appeareth," continues the exposition, "that the unity of these holy churches, in sundry places assembled standeth not by knowledging of one governor in earth over all churches. For neither the whole church Catholic together nor any particular church apart, is bound to acknowledge any one universal governor over the whole church other than Christ. The unity therefore of the church is not conserved by the bishop of Rome's authority or doctrine, but the unity of the Catholic Church, which all Christian men in this article do profess, is conserved and kept by the help and assistance of the Holy Spirit of God, in retaining and maintaining of such doctrine and profession of Christian faith, and true observance of the same, as is taught by the Scripture and the doctrine apostolic."

The text goes on to speak emphatically of the usurpations of the bishop of Rome.

Very Catholic is the exposition of the Seven Sacraments—all of them, with none omitted. For example:

"The sacrament of penance is properly the absolution pronounced by the priest upon such as be penitent for their sins, and do Knowledge and shew themselves to be. To the obtaining of the which absolution or sacrament of penance be required contribution, confession, and satisfaction."

Likewise in the Sacrament of the Altar, the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation is stated explicitly. So matrimony is declared a sacrament, and ordination, though



with much to say against the usurping claims of the bishop of Rome, and lastly extreme unction. The article on Justification denounces "predestination," and declares it to be "plain that not only faith, as it is a distinct virtue or gift by itself, is required to our justification, but also the other gifts of the grace of God, with a desire to do good works, proceeding of the same grace." And again "no faith is sufficient to justification or salvation, but such a faith as worketh by charity. Our good works which we do, being once justified, by faith and charity, avail both to the conservation and perfection of the said virtues in us, and also to the increase and end of our justification and everlasting salvation."

The next Article on Good Works explains that by good works "we mean not the superstitious works of man's own invention," as those on which monks, friars and nuns rely, nor on the other hand such as are 'done by the power of reason and natural will of man, without faith in Christ', but such as men justified do work in charity and faith or in remorse for sin. And the last article declares it to be

'a very good and charitable deed to pray for souls departed,' and 'to cause others to pray for them as well in masses and exequies, as at other times, and to give alms for them, according to the usage of the Church and ancient opinion of the old fathers, trusting that these things do not only profit and avail them, but also declare us to be charitable folk, because we have mind and desire to profit them, which, notwithstanding they be departed this present life, yet remain they still members of the same mystical body of Christ whereunto we pertain."

The unctuousness of the last is admirable! And as in the *Ten Articles* and the *Institution* the text proceeds to disclaim particular knowledge of the place and state of the departed and declares that in order to put away the abuses in this matter brought in by the maintainers of the papacy of Rome, it is better to "abstain from the name of

purgatory," under color of which the papal abuses have been advanced, and the fond idea that masses said at *Scala Coeli* might profit the souls more than those said at some other place

The *Necessary Doctrine* was no longer than the *Institution* of which it was a revision and a clear improvement in form and language. And one notes, that however far these two formularies are from accepting the Augsburg Confession, in plan and form they appear as a combination of the *Ten Articles* with the *Shorter* and *Longer Catechisms* of Luther

## Chapter 6

### Prayer-Book and Articles and the Elizabethan Settlement

#### I

THE DEATH OF HENRY VIII on the twenty-eighth of January, 1547, removed the chief obstacle from the path of protestant reform in the Church of England. There had been, perhaps, some late waverings from the severity of the act of the Six Whips, but in the main, Catholic doctrine and observance still made the ecclesiastical law and custom of the realm when Edward VI, a priggish child of eleven, succeeded to the throne. The royal finances were embarrassed, poverty was prevalent, and the government seemed uncertain. The English experience of Protectors had not been cheering. Vexed questions arose as to the King's will. Yet out of the initial crisis, the earl of Hertford, Edward's uncle, emerged as Protector, and became Duke of Somerset. By this title he is known to history as a ruler of considerable capacity, and graciously inclined, in spite of personal avarice. But in political intrigue he was no match for the more sinister Warwick, who overthrew him within three years and assumed the leadership of the State as Duke of Northumberland. Both these men, while differing in honesty and motive, favored the Reform. The privy council could not be unanimous when so much was unsettled as to doctrine and ceremonial, but it leaned preponderantly toward the New Learning, with Archbishop

Cranmer, a facile and constructive talent, promoting the same. The formal result, for the reign of Edward, consisted in the Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552, and the Forty-two Articles of Religion, called also of the latter date. The last, however, were agreed upon so near the close of Edward's reign that they did not become part of the ecclesiastical law of the land before Mary's reactionary changes overwhelmed both Articles and Prayer Book for the time. The Prayer Book of 1552 was to re-emerge nearly intact upon Elizabeth's accession. But the Articles were not confirmed and were formally superseded by the revision of 1562, which finally was reaffirmed with slight alterations in the thirty-nine Articles of 1571. These still present the doctrines of the English Church.

In 1547 Parliament and Convocation seemed to share the liberal mind of the Protector. The law of treason was relaxed and the old statute *de haeretico comburendo* was repealed along with the Act of the Six Articles and restrictions upon printing and reading the Scriptures. Convocation voted for the ministration of the communion in both kinds, and Parliament quickly turned their decision into law. The statute<sup>1</sup> making this decree, like so much English ecclesiastical legislation, emphasized the royal desire for "perfect unity and concord," and spoke of the abuse and reviling of the blessed Sacrament by wicked or ignorant men, who not only disputed irreverently "of that most high mystery, but also, in their sermons, preachings, readings, arguments, talks, rhymes, songs, plays, or jests, name or call it by such vile and unseemly words, as Christian ears do abhor to hear rehearsed." So penalties were set on such revilings, and it was decreed that the people, with the priest, should receive the Sacrament in both kinds.

There was call enough for such an act, inasmuch as the repeal of the Six Whips and other highly penal statutes had loosed men's tongues. No seemly uniformity of usage prevailed, the streets resounded with disputes and ribaldry,

<sup>1</sup> Gee and Hardy, o. c. pp. 322 sqq.

while the press began to teem with satires. There was much image breaking. Catholic reactionaries looked on malignantly or obstructed when they might, while the lack of a clearly defined and dominant strain of Protestant belief and practice deepened the confusion. The English people, with their leaping national English consciousness and Wyckliffite backgrounds, would not take just what the German Luther taught, or Bucer advocated, nor what Bullinger, Zwingli's successor, inculcated even more congenially. Scandalous fighting over the Mass moved the Council to impose silence on this matter, and commit the disobedient Bishop Gardiner to the Tower. The conflicting ineffectiveness of partially repealed legislation called loudly for further authoritative action to restore some show of harmony and regain that seemly uniformity of usage so dear to the hearts alike of English kings and loyal subjects.

For a while the Protector and Council proceeded by royal proclamations and orders as to preaching. These were rather confusing, whether taken individually or when compared with each other. But they showed a genial intent to restrain divers and unauthorized changes in church services and ceremonial, while preparing men for a new order of service, when it should be declared. A number of books against the Mass appeared, and an English translation of *Erasmus's Paraphrase of the New Testament* stirred many readers. Translations were made of works of Melancthon, Luther, Zwingli, Bullinger, Calvin and others. The nature of the Sacrament was vehemently disputed over—that controversy which well may be called the central tragedy of Protestant reform in the sixteenth century. A disputation over it in the House of Lords lasted through a good part of December 1548, and was participated in by lay lords as well as bishops. In the end the views of Crammer and Somerset prevailed by a good majority.

The Archbishop had gradually reached his convictions upon the nature of the Eucharist. Early in his career, transubstantiation had repelled him. The doctrine of the real presence expressed in the Ten Articles (1536) and

the *Institution of a Christian Man* (1538) might be interpreted as consubstantiation, the Lutheran conception. Cranmer readily had subscribed to this. But he opposed in Parliament the Act of the Six Whips, and did not like the doctrine in *The Necessary Erudition* of 1543. As against the clear transubstantiation there asserted, he sheltered himself within his principle of submission to the royal supremacy. He had been strongly drawn toward Lutheranism from the time of his mission in Germany, whither the King sent him in 1531. There he became intimate with Oslander, then pastor in Nuremberg, and married his niece.<sup>2</sup> So he naturally inclined toward the Lutheran view of the Sacrament, and permanently adopted the doctrine of justification by faith alone.

In the first years of Edward, Cranmer, loosed from his anxious subservience to Henry, invited a number of foreign divines to England. Peter Martyr, an Italian who was made professor of divinity at Oxford, à Lasco, a noble Pole, and Bucer from Strasbourg, who was made a professor of divinity at Cambridge, were among them. The foreign influence was thus strengthened in the official English national Church, and foreign pastors were installed for the congregations of German or Dutch, French and Italian Protestants resident in England. This was urged by Cranmer and favored by other members of Somerset's Council as a measure combining Christian charity with Christian policy.<sup>3</sup> Cranmer issued a Catechism in 1548, which was a translation from a Lutheran original.

Before this, however, and clearly before the debate above referred to in the House of Lords, Cranmer's views of the Sacrament were loosened from the Lutheran insist-

<sup>2</sup> He did not see fit to bring her home with him but sent for her in 1534 after he was Archbishop. In the time of the Six Whips, 1539 he returned her to Germany. Malicious tongues alleged that he used to carry her about with him on his Archiepiscopal journeys, in a chest with breathing holes in it.

<sup>3</sup> See Strype *Memorials of Cranmer* pp. 335 (234) sqq. (Chapter XXII)

ence upon the real presence, which he acknowledged he had held to in error of the truth.<sup>4</sup> So he passed on to an opinion substantially in accord with that of Zwingli, Bullinger and Bucer, or one may say, of Wyclif. This is the view represented by the Prayer Book and the forty two or, subsequently, the thirty nine Articles.

In 1549 Edward's first Act of Uniformity<sup>5</sup> was enacted, with its great schedule, *The Book of Common Prayer*. It recited the existence of "divers forms of common prayer, commonly called the service of the Church, that is to say, the Use of Sarum [Salisbury], of York, of Bangor, and of Lincoln," and recently of various forms besides. Pointing out the inconvenience of such diversity as well as innovation, it stated that to obtain "a uniform quiet and godly order," the King had appointed Archbishop Cranmer and certain discreet bishops, with other learned men, to "draw and make one convenient and meet order, rite, and fashion of common and open prayer and administration of the sacraments." This is now accomplished by them with the aid of the Holy Ghost, and is set forth in the book delivered to his Majesty entitled, *The Book of the Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacrament*. The act enjoined the use of this, and laid penalties upon such of the clergy as might refuse, and upon persons who should satirize it in songs or plays. Psalms or prayers taken from the Bible might also be used on occasion. The same year an act was passed legalizing the marriage of priests.<sup>6</sup>

The church services in use when Edward came to the throne,—the "divers forms" referred to in the Statute of Uniformity—were much the same as they had been before his father's breach with Rome. The Prayer Book abolished this diversity and set a uniform "use" or service for the whole realm, and one which differed from any "use" pre-

<sup>4</sup> See Strype, *Memorials of Cranmer* Chapter XXV pp 364 (254) sqq for Cranmer's writings upon the Sacrament and his Controversy with Gardiner and others (1550-1552)

<sup>5</sup> Gee and Hardy o c pp 358 sqq

<sup>6</sup> Gee and Hardy, o c. p 366.

vously followed.<sup>7</sup> Cranmer was the leading advocate of this change, and the chief author of the Book of Common Prayer, while Bishop Gardiner was the chief obstructionist. Between the two were other ecclesiastics and learned laymen, who would not go as far as Cranmer wished. So the book was the result of many arguments and compromises. Its Communion Service departed from the Catholic liturgies by discarding the conception of the Mass as a sacrifice and an oblation, which became instead a celebration, "with these thy holy gifts" of bread and wine, "the memorial which thy Son hath willed us to make." A "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving" was offered, not (as Cranmer explained) to reconcile us to God, but to testify the duty of those who have been reconciled by Christ. Thus, consciously or unconsciously, Cranmer and the Prayer Book fell in with Luther's denial of the sacrificial character of the Mass. And one may say that the rest of the Prayer Book had as much Lutheranism as it had of Roman Catholicism, allowing for the general fact that it was Christian and presented the fund of Christian prayer and teaching long domiciled in the Roman Catholic Church.

The substitution of a new English service for the old and mainly Latin rituals was received with some approval, but also with a dissent and hostility that in the Southwest of England broke out into a dangerous revolt.<sup>8</sup> Economic troubles contributed to this rebellious reaction, which may perhaps be regarded as a prelude to the more national return to Catholicism under Philip and Mary. It was sup-

<sup>7</sup> See the statements of Gasquet and Bishop on page 2 of their *Edward VI and the Book of Common Prayer* (1890) which I have used for the next few pages.

<sup>8</sup> See the very interesting Catholic reactionary articles of the Rebels demanding the Mass in Latin, the Act of the Six Whips, the restoration of Images and the old services, prayer by name for the souls in Purgatory a recall of the English Bibles, and so forth with Cranmer's elaborate refutations in Strype, *Memorials of Cranmer*, Appendix, No. XL (pp. 799-840).



pressed with considerable difficulty and the shedding of blood. Indeed upon the fall of Somerset some expected that the Church of England might be turned back toward its earlier conservatism. This expectation was quickly dispelled by the bill to deface images and destroy old service books (Jan. 1550) and by Warwick's confirmatory letter in the King's name to Cranmer. It was plain that reforms were to be drastically pressed. The proceedings to deprive Gardiner, the ablest of all the reactionaries, of his bishopric of Winchester, which had been commenced under Somerset, were carried to a conclusion. He was imprisoned, with Bonner also, Bishop of London, who likewise was deprived, and Ridley made bishop in his stead.<sup>9</sup> A New Ordinal was prepared, and the Calvinistic Hooper,<sup>10</sup> was with great difficulty persuaded to submit even to its short rites, and be consecrated Bishop of Gloucester. He and Ridley were expected to destroy the Altars of Baal. The substitution of communion tables, properly placed, proceeded apace. Some of the old altars were made into hogsties—*arae factae sunt harae*—writes a correspondent of Bullinger.<sup>11</sup> The government's pruning of church revenue and confiscation of church valuables no longer needed in the reformed ritual, presented further obstacles to cumbrous rites and the support of supernumerary ministrants.

Thus ecclesiastic reform was driven along, while its more prudent friends, like Bucer, feared lest the land was insufficiently weaned from its old superstitions—a condition from which reactions might arise. At all events, the Prayer Book of 1549, detested by Catholics or reactionaries, and unsatisfactory to progressive Protestants, was hardly deemed final. It did not represent the last stage of religious thought even of its chief author Cranmer. From its first

<sup>9</sup> Not less than six reactionary bishops were deprived. See Strype, *o. c.*, Chapter XX for the manner and reasons of depriving the bishops of Worcester and Chrocester.

<sup>10</sup> A very interesting person, see post, Chapter 8.

<sup>11</sup> Gardiner, *Lollardy*, etc. III p. 308.

publication, a revision was looked for, and in fact shortly was begun. Possibly the design of Cranmer was to disavow and change those parts and phrases of the book of 1549, which Gardiner and other would-be Catholics had seized upon as evidence of the recognition of Catholic doctrine. The next Prayer Book should belong unquestionably and emphatically to the Reform. And so it did, with its alterations of the communion service, its discarding of the word "altar," its omission of the intercession for the dead, and other changes.<sup>12</sup> Judging from its recitals "a great number of people in divers parts of this realm" had refused to attend services in the churches, and doubts had arisen as to the manner of conducting them. All persons were now enjoined to attend under "pain of punishment by the censures of the Church" and were forbidden to frequent other forms of service.<sup>13</sup> There could be no doubt as to the progressively coercive intentions of its authors. But the days of the boy Edward were numbered, and within a few months of the establishment of the Prayer Book of 1552, Mary came to the throne and abolished it. It was restored by Elizabeth in 1559, and has endured with few changes to the present day.

*The Book of Common Prayer* was a product of the mixed English race. Written in a language which was Teutonic and Romance, it was itself an Anglican harmony framed of Roman and Teutonic elements. As it has helped ennoble the English language and evoke the harmonies of English prose, so has it enriched and harmonized and beautified the religious mood and feeling of generations of English worshippers. It was the finished form of expression of the Christian genius of England. One need not ask that it should have added to religious thought.

Cranmer's share in the composition of the Forty-two Articles of 1552 was as his share in the composition of the Prayer Books. His was the chief constructive mind and

<sup>12</sup> See more specifically, Gasquet and Bishop, *o.c.* Chapter XVI.

<sup>13</sup> Gee and Hardy, *o.c.* pp. 369 sqq.

hand, but others took part in the work of drafting, and of revision upon consultation <sup>14</sup> Having apparently been agreed upon by Convocation, the Articles were published by the King's command shortly before Edward died (May or June 1553) They were declared to have been drawn up "for the avoiding of controversy in opinions, and the establishment of a godly concord in certain matters of religion" It is clear that their composition was influenced by the need to combat definite errors, as of the Anabaptists and Millenarians for example, and also that they could not be regarded as a complete formulation of the tenets of the English Church In part, both language and substance were borrowed from the Augsburg Confession, as a comparison between the two documents makes evident <sup>15</sup>

Apparently the Articles were not explicitly annulled in the reign of Philip and Mary Upon the accession of Elizabeth they remained unnoticed for a time, while certain provisional articles were set forth by the bishops The excellent Parker had been made Archbishop of Canterbury, and a royal commission in 1559 was deputed to visit the dioceses, and take note of the disturbance of religion caused by Mary's reign, the use or rejection of the Prayer Book, and like matters The Convocations of Canterbury and York were called to assemble in 1562 In the meanwhile the archbishop, assisted by certain bishops, had been revising the Forty two Articles, using the Latin version of 1552 The Lutheran strain was still strong in the minds of these revisors But since in the course of years new errors had appeared, the revision was obliged to take notice of them in the framing of its propositions, while certain specifically directed articles of the former date were omitted as no longer needed It was thought expedient to state explicitly that Confirmation, Ordination, Marriage, Penance and Extreme Unction were not "Sacraments of the Gos-

<sup>14</sup> Charles Hardwick's lucid *History of the Articles of Religion* (1851) is still unsurpassed

<sup>15</sup> See in detail Hardwick, *o. c.* pp. 100 sqq

pel", the authority of a national church to alter ceremonies was declared and the meaning of the royal supremacy. The laity were to receive both cup and bread.

After discussion and some revision of the archbishop's draft, Convocation adopted the *Thirty-nine Articles* to which number they had been reduced. There is some uncertainty as to their ratification by the Privy Council and the Queen, yet they would appear to have been ratified in their Latin version. It was this Latin version that was again slightly revised by Convocation in 1571, and put into English. The same year Parliament passed a statute compelling the clergy to subscribe to them in the English version, which was spoken of in the act as having been adopted in 1562.<sup>16</sup> The Queen reluctantly gave her assent, bitterly as she was opposed to Parliament's initiative in Church affairs.

So the Articles of Religion of the Church of England were formed through a combined process of selection and repudiation, carried out by men possessing a talent for harmonious construction. No originality was asserted, no novelty was sought. Yet they sufficiently declared the position and represented the temperament, of the Church of England. Again, an English result is attained through materials not distinctively English, and in part even distinctly foreign.

Since the mind of Cranmer, with its gift of cadenced utterance, had a chief share in fashioning Prayer Books and Articles, these devotional and declaratory compositions accorded with his ecclesiastical persuasions, and represented a partial accomplishment of his main design. More than one group of motives swayed the purposes of this archbishop, in whom personal simplicity veiled his political faculties. If his great talents seemed adaptable and time-serving, they served as well what was or became his dominant ideal: a national church under the headship of the national ruler, but independent of the usurped au-

thority of the pope. He may have held this to be the best for all nations, with the fine hope of a doctrinal harmony uniting them in spiritual concord. He assuredly held to it for England with all his mind and heart: the Church should obey the King, both of them freed from bondage to the Roman bishop. Seeking pardon from Queen Mary for his brief support of Lady Jane Grey, in deference to Edward's Testament, he said truthfully.

"Now as concerning the state of religion, as it is used in this realm of England at this present, if it please your Highness to license me, I would gladly write my mind unto your Majesty. I will never, God willing, be author of sedition, to move subjects from the obedience of their Heads and Rulers, which is an offense most detestable. If I have uttered my mind to your Majesty, being a Christian Queen and Governor of this Realm, then I shall think myself discharged. For it lies not in me, but in your Grace only, to see the reformation of things that be amiss. To private subjects it appertaineth not to reform things, but quietly to suffer that they cannot amend." 17

In his last hours he said before the Queen's Commissioners

"that the loss of his promotions grieved him not. . . . But what stuck closest to him and created him the greatest sorrow, was, to think that all the pains and trouble, that had been taken by King Henry and himself, for so many years, to retrieve the ancient authority of the Kings of England, and to vindicate the nation from a foreign power, and from the baseness and infinite inconveniences of crouching to the Bishops of Rome, should now thus easily be quite undone again." 18

This ideal of the archbishop long dominated the English Church.

17 Strype's *Cranmer*, Appendix No. LXXIV.

18 Strype's *Cranmer*, p. 334 (372).

The return of the realm to Roman Catholicism and its reconciliation to the pope, under the half Spanish Mary and her altogether Spanish spouse, represented no lasting popular reaction. A part of the population had been Catholics at heart in Edward's time, their return to the papal fold might be a glad home-coming. But the national feeling was strong among them, and while they favored Catholic doctrines, rather than those of the Reform, a goodly proportion detested subservience to Rome. Besides these sincere Catholics, whether royal or papal minded, many men were quick to take their cue from the royal impulse. Altogether there was a reactionary majority in the Church. Accordingly in October 1553, a scant three months after Mary's accession, Convocation piously or servily declared for the sacrament in one form for the laity, for transubstantiation, and for the adoration of the Eucharist. And through the reign of Philip and Mary the mass of the people dumbly turned back to Roman Catholicism.

Yet a good part of the realm had sincerely accepted the Protestant Anglicanism of Edward and Cranmer, and through this Catholic reign did but grudgingly or outwardly conform to the royal and parliamentary decrees, while a minority held back in stiff dissent. From the last, the roll of Marian martyrs—some three hundred in all—was recruited. Soon after Mary's accession, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and Bradford found themselves in one chamber in the Tower, because the place was full.<sup>19</sup>

So either from ready conviction, or deference to the royal authority and fear of the consequences of refusal, the greater part of the bishops and other clergy, with their parishes, flocked back to popery. Yet Mary's reign was but an interlude, which had no lasting effect upon the subse-

<sup>19</sup> So says Latimer in his protestation to Queen Mary's Commissioners. Strype, *Ecc. Memorials*, III, II, p. 292.

quent gradual and permanent turning of the realm to Anglicanism—and beyond. The Marian legislation did not fail to acknowledge the vested right of the grantees of lands and property formerly belonging to the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>20</sup> And one notes that the royal and national desire for uniformity still finds expression in proclamations and statutes, and that from the fair start of their preambles, the enactments might have proceeded to establish Edwardine prayer books just as readily as Roman forms. And indeed one may think that this approbation of uniformity, and of conformity to law, as well as obedience to the royal will, and fear of consequences, was embodied in the conduct of such men as Cecil, and of that marvellous heir presumptive, the princess Elizabeth. Naturally exhortations to law abiding obedience and tranquillity had prominent place in her first royal utterances and those of her first parliament when she had succeeded to the throne after that morning of November 17, 1558, when Mary died, and "all the Churches in London did ring, and at night [men] did make bonfires and set tables in the streets, and did eat and drink, and made merry for the new queen."

Cecil was in Elizabeth's confidence before she left Hatfield on the day of Mary's death, to begin her progress to London. He was to be her chief councillor for forty years. Two enigmatic words in the document which the next day proclaimed her Queen gave evidence of the consultation of this great political pair, and foreshadowed Elizabeth the Queen, and the policy of her reign. They were the words *et caetera*. She was proclaimed Queen of England, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, *et caetera*! Those two words stood in the place of Mary's blank omission of the title "Supreme head of the Church," an omission which some people thought invalidated her Acts of Parliament. For her successor to have continued this omission might have been taken to announce a Roman Catholic policy,

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. in Mary's second act of repeal, 1554, Gee and Hardy, o. c. p. 394.

while to have restored the "Supreme head" to its place, would have imprudently declared more perhaps than the Queen and her secretary had yet decided on. It was not to be the custom of Elizabeth to announce her decisions before she had made them! Certainly these were two prophetic words.

The same proclamation forbade "the breach, alteration, or change of any order or usage presently established,"—another note of prudent stepping, or rather of not stepping at all till the firm stepping-stones should be distinguishable in the troubled waters. For they were troubled enough. The Romanists were talking seditiously against the new Queen: the "gospellers" were noting and pulling down images. A goodly sprinkling of these disorderly people were quickly jailed, and before many weeks another proclamation forbade irregular preaching and dispute, tending to the breach of "common quiet" according to the authority committed to her highness for the quiet governance of all manner her subjects. By this authority so unprovocatively stated, clergy and laity were directed neither to preach or listen to "any manner of doctrine or preaching" other than the Gospels and Epistles of the day, the Ten Commandments, the Common Litany used in her majesty's own chapel, the Lord's Prayer and the Creed—all in English.<sup>21</sup> This use of the vernacular could not be objected to, since an unrepealed statute of Henry VIII permitted it. The Spanish Ambassador might sneer that such use of English was the custom of heretics. Elizabeth was content that others should notice this as well as he. In her ride through London, to her coronation, when a lady clad in white silk as "Truth" had presented her a great English Bible, Elizabeth received it with thanks, and kissed it, laid it to her bosom in the sight of all, protesting that she would often read over that book.

But the Queen's position was netted with difficulties, while dangers beset England. Mary had just lost Calais. A

<sup>21</sup> Gee and Hardy, *o. c.* p. 416.



treaty of peace hung in the balance, with England as unprepared to fight as Philip was reluctant to continue the war against the French king Philip made Elizabeth a perfunctory offer of marriage, which she most courteously declined. So he sought the hand of the French king's daughter Philip was Elizabeth's friend to this extent that he would not permit her to be crushed, and Mary Stuart, a niece of all the French Guises set up in her stead. Peace was made, Calais was judiciously abandoned. But still the coming Franco-Spanish marriage, the papal threat to proclaim Elizabeth a usurping heretic and bastard, the possibility of all manner of invasion from Scotland, France, the Netherlands, the realm unprepared and possibly divided, constituted perils enough.

The general situation and the stubborn convictions of many of the clergy, especially of the bishops, all of whom had been appointed in the former reign, retarded and confused the religious settlement. There was also some division of opinion among those who desired the reestablishment of the national and royal church. One suggestion was to proceed against the Marian bishops by *praemunire*, and defer legislation, while tacitly permitting such return to Anglicanism as might be had under existing statutes.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand a projected "Device for the Alteration of Religion,"<sup>23</sup> composed within the circle of the Queen's Council, presented a searching consideration of foreign and domestic dangers, looked the situation in the face, and advised that the coming parliament should proceed at once. A book of services should be established, and the disloyal or reluctant Romanists on the one hand, and the over zealous innovators on the other, should both be constrained to conform for the quiet and safety of the whole realm.

An incident destined to become famous marked the opening of Parliament on January twenty fifth. The abbot

<sup>22</sup> Goodrich "Divers Points of Religion."

<sup>23</sup> See Stype *Annals of the Reformation* I, I p. 74. The document is given, *ib.* I II pp. 392-398.